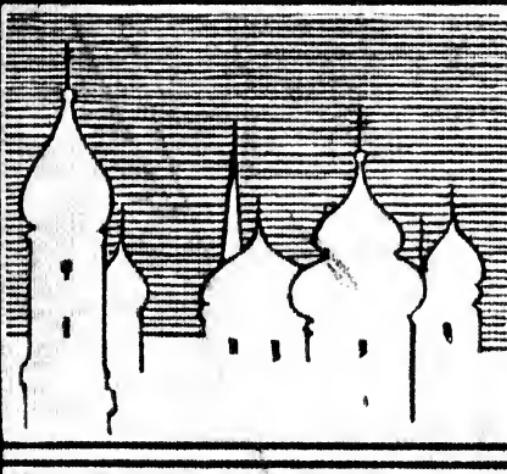


The
YOUTH'S COMPANION-SERIES

NORTHERN EUROPE



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A Scene in Russia

See pages 109-122

YOUTH'S COMPANION SERIES

NORTHERN EUROPE

NORWAY, RUSSIA, THE NETHERLANDS,
FRANCE, GERMANY, AND
SWITZERLAND

BOSTON, U.S.A.

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THE YOUTH'S COMPANION
SERIES

GEOGRAPHICAL READERS

THE WIDE WORLD

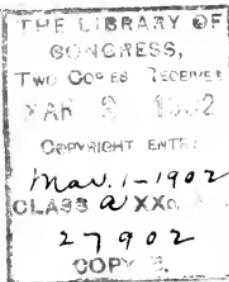
NORTHERN EUROPE

UNDER SUNNY SKIES (In preparation)

TOWARD THE RISING SUN (In preparation)

"STRANGE" LANDS NEAR HOME

(In preparation)



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PREFATORY NOTE

THE volumes of the "*Youth's Companion*" Series entitled "*The Wide World*," "*Northern Europe*," "*Under Sunny Skies*," "*Toward the Rising Sun*," and "*Strange Lands near Home*" provide in interesting and attractive form a supply of reading material for either home or school that is especially suitable for supplementing the formal teaching of geography.

"*The Wide World*," with which the series properly begins, presents vivid scenes from many countries. Each of the succeeding volumes enters into somewhat greater detail on a limited area, which is indicated by the title. The sketches have been prepared by authors whose work needs no introduction.

"*Northern Europe*" contains descriptions of countries lying north of the Alps, and brings into prominence those features which seem to the visitor striking or characteristic.

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NORTHERN EUROPE

THE FARÖE ISLANDS

ABOUT the year 725 Irish and Scotch monks discovered the islands now called by the name "Faröe." As every schoolboy should know, the Faröe Islands lie nearly midway between Scotland and Iceland.

One of the discoverers describes the islets as being very small, of a mountainous character, and separated by narrow, river-like sounds. Concerning their primeval settlement he says, "The islands have remained uninhabited since the creation of the world, with the exception of one century, during which hermits from Scotland found refuge along their desolate shores."

During the ninth century vikings from Norway and Scotland began to settle on some of the islands. Since then the population has steadily increased; yet only half of the twenty-two islets are inhabited by an average of one

thousand individuals each — about eleven thousand in all.

The solemnity of these rocky cliffs has been little relieved by the native artisan, but he has worked in some places with good taste, and beautified what nature suggested. Thorshavn is a fair example. Situated on an eminence rising from a valley between two mountains, this village of light-painted wooden houses harmonizes with the grass-green hillsides, and somewhat resembles a piece of jewelry placed on emerald satin.

The most conspicuous residence is that of the *Amtmand*, or sheriff; it is built in modern design and bears a white flag pole, on which the Danish banner floats at the arrival of a man of war or on holiday occasions.

There are no paved streets on any of the islands. The tall, hardy Faroese carries heavy articles on his muscular back, or, if the load be too great for that, uses a sort of wheelbarrow on the worn paths.

Unlike the Icelanders, the Faroese display a considerable degree of taste in dress. They are diligent weavers, and produce admirable knitted articles. Faroese stockings are famous for solidity

The Faroe Islands

and quality. The people dye most fabrics to a dark brown, and the islanders understand well how to cut and prepare the woven cloth.

The Faroese man has a well-dressed look with his pointed, tasseled cap, and the row of silver-plated buttons on his brown jacket, which is usually open in front except at the neck. A broad belt, often elaborately embroidered, girds his waist; the indispensable stockings reach up under his short breeches; and his moccasins of tanned lambskin are secured to his legs by twined lace.

The women commonly wrap themselves in excellent home-spun shawls, fastened across the breast by a long metal pin. From under their heavy petticoats peep yellow moccasins. On Sundays or at festivals both men and women wear eider-down caps, and the children, who dress exactly like their parents, are happy when permitted to try on the soft head gear.



Northern Europe

The chief industries are fowling, and the breeding of sheep. The soil produces few crops; but barley has been cultivated with some success, the crop of oats is considerable, and potatoes flourish.

In spring the sheep graze during the day, and are brought home toward sunset; but there is no regular shepherd life about the folds, as in Norway. The sheep are sheared, and the wool is turned over to the women, who skillfully work it into useful fabrics.

The people have a legend of an old man who is said to live with his flock on the island of Little Dimon. None but he ever found this islet habitable, for the mountain sides rise almost perpendicularly from the sea, and the summit can be reached by only one difficult path; but up there the old man's sheep are said to graze on the plateaus, and he himself lives in some hut or cave, regardless of the world outside.

Occasionally this mythical shepherd is seen at night, steering his swift boat to the fishing places; but he always returns before dawn, and though Thorshavn lies but a few miles from his dwelling he is never seen there. He is said to have a

The Faroe Islands

full, streaming beard, and to wear long, druidical apparel.

In summer all the islands resound with the cries of sea birds, which soar in huge flocks from the gray cliffs, noisily ascend, and almost obscure the sky by their dense masses. Often these flocks of birds look like threatening rain clouds. Sometimes they fly farther out to sea than their strength warrants, and then such of the exhausted birds as are not web-footed settle down upon some passing ship.

Often they descend on the rigging in such crowds that the yards break, making much work for the sailors, who dread the "fowl clouds" more than a gale. On some vessels the crews are provided with firearms, and an attempt is made to keep the birds away; but often the flocks settle down with such suddenness and in such vast numbers that a great deal of shooting makes little impression on them.

Sailors tell of long fights with the birds, and often endeavor to convince an incredulous listener by showing him scars from beaks and talons.

In the fowling season, when all the nests are lined with down, the Faroese youth prepares for

Northern Europe

venturesome expeditions. He carries to the cliff tops a long, solid rope with a yard or two of chain at one end. This chain, placed on a rocky edge,



A Fowling Expedition

protects the rope from being frayed or cut. The man also carries a pliable pole attached to a large net, and other nets hang loose from his belt. A steel-pointed steering rod completes his outfit.

The Faroe Islands

Parties of young men, three in each, start early in the morning to climb the black, dewy cliffs, at whose towering summits the night clouds linger, and whose feet are wreathed in white fog. Having reached the fowling grounds, they find a suitable place for the chain. A protruding part of the mountain is preferred. The fowler takes his nets and rod. Then his companions bind the rope round his waist, lift him over the edge, and lower him slowly down the precipice, giving him time to steer clear of rocks below. When the chain passes through the palms of the men above they hold on hard.

The fowler regulates his descent by appointed signals made by striking the rope with his hand. As he hovers over the nests he flings his pole net into the swarms of birds, which, scared from their sleep, flutter about in bewilderment with shrill cries.

Having filled his nets with birds, he gives the signal and is hoisted up. Then he discharges his prey, examines the rope, loosens his belt, attaches empty nets to it, and sets out with his comrades for a new ground.

In addition to the fowler's risk that the rope may break, or that heavy stones may fall on him, he runs some hazard of attack from the sea eagle, against whose powerful wing strokes the boldest man is almost defenseless. The fowler, with his back against the mountain, balancing on some nest, may parry a series of attacks, and succeed in stabbing the eagle with his rod; but if his antagonists are many, or if they tear the rope with their talons, as they are said to have done in some cases, he finds his grave hundreds of feet below on the rocky shore.

Wire ropes would give some security against the terrible risks, but they are not known to the islanders, and would be too expensive.

When all the nets are tightly packed with down each party returns to some sheltered plateau, to which the boys have driven the ponies. These small, shaggy animals carry their masters and loads homeward over slippery mountain paths, through winding defiles and across shallow streams, till at length the adventurers see their own valley and the straggling huts with turf-clad roofs upon which long grasses wave a cheery welcome.

The Faroe Islands

The children run out, clapping their hands joyfully, and on the threshold stands the mother, happy if none of the fowlers have been lost.

The highly prized downs are then assorted, put up in bundles, and taken to the market at Thorshavn. The sum obtained there usually amounts to more than the family's returns from the tilling of the soil. Indeed, fowling and wool raising are the chief resources of these people.

What the dog is to the Eskimo and the cod to the Icelander, the eider duck is to the Faroese. The uncommonly fine down of one species, called the "king eider," is a treasure to the lucky fowler; but the king eiders are rare.

The Faroese youth, fed from infancy on tales of elves and trolls, is strongly inclined to romance. He likes to take his lantern, when the night is dark and stormy, cast himself into his boat with the large skin sails, and take in his father's bow nets, working through drenching foam and defying the elements. When all are saved and the prow turned homeward, he abandons himself to the spirit of the fables heard round the fireplace at home.

Northern Europe

He hugs the sails so close to the wind that the lee rail plunges into the sea; he poises with the tiller to windward; his heart throbs with glee and courage. On all sides roar the turbulent billows, gleaming with phosphorescent crests and lashing his cheeks with their foam.

JOHANNES H. WISBY.

LIFE IN NORWAY

IT is a mistake to suppose that Norway is a country remote from the world, whose chief claim



A Fjord in Norway

to existence is that it is a romantic pleasure ground. Norway is in fact easily accessible. Railways penetrate it from Sweden, extending

to the North Sea; and steamboat lines ply regularly between its ports and those of Denmark, Great Britain, and the United States.

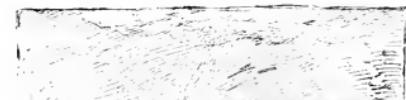
Christiania, its capital, nestling among pine-clad hills at the head of a romantic fiord or inlet which is sixty miles long, is a beautiful city of a hundred thousand people. It has broad streets laid out at right angles, and stores and hotels which would do credit to any capital.

The people of Christiania are exceedingly well educated, refined, and hospitable, very fond of their city and country, and much given to social pleasures and music.

Railways are comparatively few in Norway, owing to the cost of construction in a mountainous country and to the disinclination of the people to speculative enterprise. The highways, however, are excellent, and one may "travel post" almost anywhere in a public *carriole*, or post chaise. The post stations are seven miles apart, and the traveler changes horse and carriage at each one of these stations. In certain remote country districts there are no inns; and here the traveler must lodge with the nearest farmer or priest. These people are so hospitable

Life in Norway

that they occasionally refuse to take pay, and invite the traveler to remain with them as long as he will; but the fare is often primitive. I have frequently found, in summer, that a farmer's



Scene in Norway

larder contained nothing but thick sour milk and rye bread, with sweet milk to drink. The sour milk is kept in a large, shallow tub, which at mealtime is placed upon the table. Each member of the family marks off with his spoon as much as he thinks he can eat. Each covers his

portion with sugar, and all fall to eagerly, as if it were the daintiest dish in the world.

The people of the cities dress as people do in England or America. In the country the women wear short, full woolen skirts, with bright-colored bodices decked with bangles, while the men look decidedly odd in extremely short cloth jackets with bright buttons, and trousers which ascend nearly to the armpits.



The Norwegian people are strongly inclined toward republican political principles, and greet the king of Sweden and Norway somewhat coldly on his rare visits to their country. The king is supposed to spend one third of his time in Norway, but he certainly does not do so. He has about ten thousand dollars a year from the Norwegian revenues, and it is not surprising that the great majority of the people of Norway think they could get on just as well without him.

The people celebrate the 17th of May, the anniversary of their separation from Denmark,

Life in Norway

much as we celebrate the Fourth of July — with cannon firing, fireworks, and processions, but without the firecrackers.



The Christmas and New Year's observances are not unlike those in other northern countries; but the Norwegians have a peculiar and beautiful Christmas custom, which is universal among them, of hanging out small sheaves of corn for the birds.

Skating, in the rinks and on the fiord, is a popular winter amusement, though the ice of the fiord is sometimes dangerous on account of the cuttings made by fishermen. Snowshoeing, upon shoes frequently ten feet in length, is also a favorite diversion, and some wonderful tobogganing is done just outside the capital. To the summit of a mountain close by the city great sleds are drawn by horses. Then each sled, laden with a dozen people or more, comes coasting down the mountain with terrific speed.

One Norwegian custom is very objectionable to foreigners—the practice of maintaining a suffocating heat in the dwellings, and excluding the fresh air as completely as possible.

In April the winter vanishes as if by magic; the snow disappears, and vegetation springs up at a bound. The people soon betake themselves to summer quarters in the country, and the business streets of the city are almost deserted. Another round of pleasure begins—with picnics, fishing, boating, bathing, and out-of-door diversions of all sorts. The Norwegian forests, which are chiefly of pine brightened with birch, are full of the most beautiful wild flowers. Many

Life in Norway

varieties which with us grow only when cultivated, such as the lily of the valley and sweet violets, grow wild in these Norwegian woods.

Bathing is a little dangerous in the fiords for any but good swimmers. The depth of the waters is great, and the descent of the shores abrupt. At times, too, there is in the water a sort of jellyfish which impregnates it with a poison as stinging to the skin as is the nettle. The summer residences are generally provided with bath houses which have cages to keep the swimmer in and the jellyfish out. Boating is somewhat perilous on account of the frequency of squalls.

The summer lasts from May until October, and is a delightful season. From May to September lamps are dispensed with, and in the last half of June in Christiania one may read a newspaper at midnight without artificial light. The birds seem never to sleep at this period; they are as lively at midnight as at noon.

The enterprising Norwegian's chief desire seems to be to get to America. Many intend to return to Norway when their fortunes are improved, but few ever do so.

WILLIAM H. COREY.

SCENES IN HOLLAND

PERHAPS among all the attractions that Holland can boast the windmills are most varied, and



appeal most strongly to the eye. One never tires of watching them; there are many varieties, yet they never make themselves too prominent in the landscape. Most of them are painted with the brightest of tints, which are nevertheless toned into

a delicious harmony by the blue gray of the atmosphere, and all, with their wildly whirling sails, seem to embody the very spirit of thrift and industry.

Scenes in Holland

The traveler gifted with an artistic eye, in noting how they fit the landscape, may not at first realize their vast utility, but he soon learns that they are the gigantic servitors of the country, and are used not only in draining the land, but for various lesser operations, such as crushing grain or sawing logs. Their number on any farm accurately indicates the owner's wealth, and the bride is well satisfied who goes to her new home with a dowry of several windmills.

The head gear of the women is usually elaborate and striking. Almost all of them wear caps, sometimes plain, but often diversified like that in the sketch, which is trimmed with lace and ornamented by gold pins at the sides. The quality of the lace and the richness of the pins furnish conclusive evidence of the class and wealth of the wearer. A very effective headdress is one common in Friesland, consisting of a helmet of gold, silver, or some other burnished metal, which is covered with lace, often of a very precious quality. Secured to the sides of the metal cap or "hoof



dyzer" (head iron), on a line with the eyes, are spiral ornaments of gold, or pendants set with jewels.

A lady thus bedecked presents a gorgeous appearance, not even to be exceeded by that of royalty, in its everyday dress. Still, the plain white linen cap is most common among the peasantry and very becoming to the broad, chubby faces of children.

The cleanliness of Holland deserves to pass into a score of proverbs. In some of the larger towns, where the houses front directly upon the street, the early traveler is liable to stumble over housemaids on their knees, or to be splashed by the pails of water which they are dashing against walls and windows.

Often, too, girls may be seen kneeling and rooting out grass from the chinks of a pavement, where it has tried to assert its unwelcome existence.

There are few hedges or fences in Holland, but rush-bordered ditches separate different plots of ground, and everywhere, in the frequent streamlets, are reflected the windmills, in long, wavering lines, under the wonderful sunset light.

Scenes in Holland

A little earlier in the day may be seen the milkmaid going home with two brass cans suspended on her shoulders. The farmer, also, takes his homeward way, smoking his pipe, held sidewise or upside down, according to the queer Dutch fashion.

Storks are flying at all hours across the country, their long wings loosely flapping, and their slender legs hanging down, as if broken. They are very much like the decorative Japanese stork, and the Dutch regard them with a consideration which amounts almost to reverence. Often the birds build their nests on the chimneys, but here and there are to be seen long poles stuck into the ground, and bearing at the top a sort of basket, in which the stork may rest in security.

These birds are of great benefit to the country for the reason that, although they are eaters of fish, they devour also large numbers of reptiles and insects. When one settles upon a house, it is regarded as such a good omen that the most skeptical person would never dream of driving it away, and there is still in existence a law imposing a fine upon any one who shall kill a stork.

ALEPH PAGE.

A HOLLAND DAIRY

WASHED, combed, groomed, petted, and luxuriantly stabled in winter like the finest of our race horses, and put to graze in flowery, well-watered green fields in summer, the Holstein cows of Holland can envy no animal the world over.

The two lions represented upon the heraldic shield of the Netherlands might well be replaced by two black and white Holstein cows, for the masses of the people worship cows. Cows they watch sometimes with more care than they give their own children; cows they nurse through sickness, cows they save their money to buy, and of cows they talk while awake and dream while asleep. Children are brought up with the parental reverence for cows, and no member of the human family is thought too good to sleep under the same roof with the beloved kine.

The traveler landing in Holland during spring-time will see vast herds of fine cattle in every

A Holland Dairy

stretch of green meadows — and stretches of green meadow are everywhere in this flat and almost treeless country. Every shadeless field is defined by a deep stream of pure water flowing



between prim, flowery banks, which serve, instead of fences, to keep the cattle within bounds.

A grotesque sight to people from countries where cows are not of the first importance is the spectacle of the most delicate and valuable cows enveloped in canvas coverings. The costly

creatures, lately freed from their warm winter stables, are apt to take cold from the inclemencies of the early spring, hence their blankets are not removed until the weather becomes safely warm.

The cattle remain under the blue vault of heaven day and night from the first of May until the first of November. Then they are taken into the cow houses to remain through the cold Holland winter. During the summer the cows are milked twice a day in the fields.

The busy Dutch farmer does not usually care to give any of his time to curiosity seekers, and it is not always easy for the stranger to gain admission to his household; but we secured a letter to a farmer near Broek, in North Holland, which admitted us to his cow house, and to his residence at the same time. Both were under



A Holland Dairy

one roof. Cow stable and parlor adjoined, and one was quite as clean as the other.

We were conducted to the stable first, which in reality was a wide hall, with a strip of oilcloth down the center. Rows of tiny square windows, high up on both sides, were curtained with spotless lace or thin white net, tied back with ribbons. Pots of blooming flowers were set on the sills of the windows looking south.

Beneath each curtained window was a cow stall — there were twenty-six in all, such luxurious and dainty little places! On the floors, which were of porcelain, a thick layer of clean white sawdust had been placed, and this was stamped into patterns of stars and wheels and circles, and various geometrical designs.

Of course the return of the cows from the fields to their winter quarters breaks these pretty sawdust designs into a confused mass, but during the summer they are carefully preserved.

Before and behind each row of stalls runs a trough of clear water, the first for the cows to drink from, the second to wash away all impurities. In the ceiling behind every stall is fixed a kind of iron hook, the strange and ludicrous

office of which is to hold high in the air the cow's tail, that she may not disarrange that carefully combed member!

One wonders that the cows' tails, after many generations of this tying-up process, do not grow straight up. One extravagant book of travel tried to make us believe that the tails are often tied with blue ribbons, but this we found to be an exaggeration.

It is not, however, an exaggeration to say that the cattle, every day during the winter, are washed off with warm soapsuds, dried, rubbed, combed, coddled and talked to, as if they were children; that the air of their stable is as pure as the atmosphere outside, and that no pains are spared to keep them healthy and comfortable.

Under such kind treatment they become plump, glossy, and gentle animals, that repay their owners by an enormous quantity of milk.

Leading us from the cow stable into an adjoining apartment, the farmer's wife showed us long rows of cheese presses containing round, firm Edam cheeses, which would be ready to remove from their molds after thirty-six hours of pressure.

A Holland Dairy

Every press, every bowl, every churn, every linen cloth, every pot and pan used in the making of this cheese spoke of the utmost cleanliness, and told of hours of washing and scrubbing and rubbing.

"Clean! clean! clean!" we repeated again and again, and the rosy little farmer's wife smiled with pleasure. "Clean" was evidently the one English word that she could understand.

She invited us into the living room just in front of the cows' apartment, and offered us milk. As we drank we looked around the room and sniffed the air suspiciously; but, although the stable was adjoining, not the slightest odor of cows could we detect in that clean little place.

The one elegant piece of furniture here was a tall carved Dutch chest. Our hostess opened the doors of this and displayed piles of white linen therein, enough to stock a shop. Opening another door, which we had supposed led into another room, we saw it was simply the door to the bed, which was just a shelf in the wall piled high with feathers and linen. Whether the Hollanders shut themselves in entirely in these curious beds, or leave the door ajar while asleep, I could not learn.

Northern Europe

"Perhaps they are the cows' beds," suggested a giddy one of our number. "Ask her!"

The little smiling woman shook her head in reply to the question, though after what we had just seen we should hardly have been surprised if she had told us that on cold winter nights the cows curl themselves in these downy niches in the walls.

The wooden pattens of the farmer who had brought us here in his calash were now clattering on the stones outside, and we knew that it was time for us to leave this "cows' castle." With the pleasant lowing of fine Holsteins in our ears, we drove across the green fields and into the road which led to the canal boat that was to take us away.

How broad and round was our host, the rich owner of herds of fine cows! In his black cap, blue blouse, and white wooden pattens, what an ideal type of a Dutch farmer!

I shall never forget the gratified smile he gave us when we praised his splendid cattle, and told him that nowhere in the world, outside of Holland, could we have seen their equal.

ELEANOR H. PATTERSON.

A DUTCH MARKET PLACE

THE *Groote Markt* of Rotterdam is really a little affair, but it is very interesting, nevertheless, to an American.

In the middle of a great square, which is built entirely on huge vaults over the canals, is a grove of low trees. Among these are canvas booths and hundreds of queer little carts, each with its load of fruit or vegetables.

From every direction narrow streets lead into it—so narrow that only handcarts and dogcarts can pass each other, and these are frequently tipped into cellars or upon doorsteps in the effort. On each side rise the red-tiled houses, blue, white, red, yellow, leaning toward each other in a friendly way over the alley below, so that the good housewives may gossip over their everlasting house cleaning from one side to the other.

Beyond the square, towers the cathedral, its bells chiming the hours and occasionally playing popular airs. Nearer is the bronze statue of the

great Erasmus, who was born in Rotterdam. But one scarcely notices these works of art as he enters the square. His whole attention is caught by the unusual bustle and color among the trees.

At first glance it seems as if all the Dutch gardens in the neighborhood had emptied their produce in one great confused pile. Tiny beans and beans as large as locust pods; little cucumbers that must be carried in measures lest they slip through the wickerwork baskets, and cucumbers long as a man's arm, and much more crooked; cabbages, melons, lettuce, celery, beautiful grapes and fruits of every color, flanked by tender water cresses—all are jumbled together as if nobody owned them. But as you push your way into the great heap you find little paths separating it into many bundles. Each bundle has a watchful little dog to look after its borders, and a bright-eyed little woman in her wooden shoes and short skirts, to drop her knitting and ask quickly: "Wat wil Mynheer?"

Every moment new carts are arriving, piled high with fresh vegetables, with the owners pushing sturdily in the shafts, and muzzled dogs tugging bravely in harness underneath.

A Dutch Market Place

It is a curious law in Rotterdam that all dogs in harness must be muzzled; though the faithful creatures cannot possibly break away till they are unharnessed. Meanwhile,



The Groote Markt

hundreds of dogs run loose without muzzles all over the city.

Thinking at first that the labor might tend to spoil their temper, I petted several of the draught dogs, but found them all very gentle and appreciative. Then a farmer who had stopped to rest by his cart of cabbages told me of the curious law, in broken Dutch and English.

All sorts of dogs, big and little, are used in this vegetable market. Curiously enough the smallest dogs always seem to have the biggest muzzles, which gives them a very whimsical expression. When I stopped to pet one, as he lay under his cart, he turned his head and rolled his eyes comically as if he were saying, "See what a big muzzle they have put me into. I'd crawl through it and get out of this if I dared."

Though I have watched a great many of these draught dogs with interest, I have never seen one shirking his work. The moment the master puts his hands on the shafts, the straining haunches beneath show the effort the dog is making to do his part. The moment the shafts are dropped the dog throws himself down to rest. In this he has an immense advantage over a horse; his small size and superior intelligence also make him a useful draught animal for small loads.

A Dutch Market Place

Often the fruit is brought in on simple dog-carts, in which dogs do all the work and a boy walks behind to direct progress. Sometimes three or even four dogs are harnessed abreast, and the load they draw is astonishing.

Once I watched a single dog drawing a cart in which were ten large baskets of water cresses. While his master sauntered about after customers the dog lay down to rest; but a short whistle brought him instantly to his feet, and he threaded his way carefully among carts and vegetables to where he was wanted. Like all his companion dogs he seemed to enjoy his work thoroughly, and had much the same air that we are accustomed to see in a setter or collie when he is carrying his master's cane.

Next to the dogs at the *Groote Markt* the horses were noticeable. Large, gentle, intelligent creatures they were, which came in over the wider streets with huge trucks of green behind them. Many of them had "crimpy" manes hiding their soft eyes, showing that *Mynheer* or *Mevrouw* had carefully done them up in curl papers the night before, to make a fine appearance on market day. When their loads

were removed they wandered at will on the outskirts, looking into empty baskets for stray wisps of hay or green leaves, and carefully avoiding, as if forbidden, the piles of tempting apples and vegetables, the owners of which were often far away in search of bargains.

The English or European sparrows are everywhere: the same noisy, pugnacious little rascals we have grown sadly accustomed to at home, but much more tame, and with an air of proprietorship gained from long centuries of civilization. Occasionally a flock of hens would appear unexpectedly from the fine doorway of a house,—this in the very heart of a large city,—and come running across the square to drive the sparrows from choice pickings among the fruit stands.

Here in the market is the only place in the city where one is sure to see unchanged the old Dutch costumes of the peasantry,—wooden *schoon*, bag trousers, blouses, and caps among the men; short balloon skirts, bright party-colored waists, and huge bonnets with stiff lace fringes and immense gilded ornaments among the women.

A Dutch Market Place

Once, as a woman passed dressed in the prim black and white Puritan costume of two centuries ago, I noticed with amazement two large spirals of gold wire, one on each temple. They were cone shaped, about five inches long and three in diameter at the base, and behind each a thin square of yellow metal stuck out like a donkey's ear.

A peculiarity of this market is the entire lack of hurry and confusion. There is no shouting of venders, no noise, no apparent concern to sell. *Mevrouw*'s whole attitude seems to say: "These are good vegetables; if we don't sell, we can eat." If a bunch of luscious brown grapes makes your mouth to water and your hand to go down in your pocket, only the little dog seems to understand, and sometimes he goes off to bring the owner. If not, you must wait.

Another peculiarity is the honesty. At least it seems so to strange eyes. The fruit and vegetables are excellent; and in a forenoon's watching I could see no effort to take advantage or to drive a bargain. Once a crowd of boys and men were hunting diligently a long time for some lost object, which they did n't find. When

most of them had gone away, I strolled over, and by chance noticed a tiny silver piece under the edge of a paving stone. When I picked it up there was no effort among the dozen boys who were still left to claim the money; but five or six ran away and came back in a few minutes with the little woman who had lost it.

Close to the *Groote Markt* are many canals where the red and blue boats lie, their beautiful brown sails close furled, their decks piled high with the freshest and greenest vegetables from the low farms behind the dikes on the Maas. From these the supply at the market is replenished. Whole families live aboard of them for weeks at a time. Each has its little dog, who takes it upon himself to look after everything, including the babies and children, who roll about the deck and who never seem to fall overboard, though there are no bulwarks to prevent.

Beyond the vegetable boats are queer little fishing boats, shaped like a dugout, fishing to supply the little stands about the *Groote Markt*. When *Mevrouw* comes out to buy a sole for dinner, and questions its freshness, the little man runs to the canal, yodels, and waves his hand.

A Dutch Market Place

His partner in the boat gives a heave at his net, seizes the fish it contains, and poles ashore. Then *Mevrouw* is satisfied as to its freshness, having seen it, with her own bright eyes, caught, killed, and dressed on the spot.

Though the scene is quiet to American eyes, it changes continually with ever-fresh interest, if one stops to watch it. Now a funny little baby carriage trundles by, a basket of peeled potatoes in front, and baby contentedly munching at the raw "earth apples," as they are called in Dutch.

Now *Mevrouw* comes to buy one little cabbage, and brings for it a big wicker basket; now *Mynheer* comes for a large measure of cucumbers, and carries them away in the huge pockets of his pantaloons; now a small waiter boy, a little bit of a fellow, looking very queer in a full dress suit, with claw-hammer coat and wide shirt front, comes running across the square to please some fastidious customer, and carries his purchase in his hands, for paper and string are scarce in this market.

Boys are everywhere, getting fun out of everything, and, like American boys, eating everything eatable, from pickled herring to raw

cabbage stumps; and above the whole busy, shifting scene towers the statue of the great scholar, Erasmus. His eyes are fixed on the open book he holds; his whole attitude is one of intense absorption; yet his right hand is half raised, as if the power of the words he reads were swaying him unconsciously to proclaim the truth to those who know it not.



So it is always in life. Nothing could seem farther from the bustle of the market place than the absorption of the scholar's study; yet each ministers to the other. Jans toils in the fields behind the dikes; Erasmus, by dim candle-light, pores over the mysteries of law and life; and the work of each is completed by sharing with the other.

SCENES IN BELGIUM

BELGIUM is a small, but a thrifty and beautiful country, and the Belgians are very proud of it. Their interests are centered in it and rarely extend to matters outside the kingdom. It is true that many foreigners make their home here, but they do not find it easy to become acquainted with the natives of the country.



The Belgians are chiefly composed of two races,—the Flemish, who are originally of Germanic descent, and the Walloons, descendants of the Gauls. They have each a language of their own, in which they speak to their family and friends; but they also speak and understand French, which is the language of the country. In all official business French only is used.

The public schools are free, and children are sent to them when very young. They have to obey strict rules and are dutiful to their teachers.

They learn first about their own country, drawing maps of great detail of the different parts of it so as to get thoroughly familiar with its geography. They learn the history of Belgium thoroughly, and an interesting study it is—not to them alone, but to everybody, because the Belgian provinces have been the object of many wars, belonging at different times to France, Holland, Spain, and Austria.

Everything pertaining to their own country is carefully taught, but what lies beyond does not interest them much. The rest of the world is nothing to them, and they know little about it. Once a year prizes are distributed in schools for the best worker—the one who has tried hardest to do well. On that day you see the children dressed in their best on their way to school. Many carry or wear flowers; all are eager to obtain the prize.

Thursday afternoon is always a half holiday, on which comrades spend a happy time together in the woods if it is summer, or skating or making snow statuary in the winter.

Scenes in Belgium

On a fine day you may see class after class of merry children clattering along two by two in their *sabots* (wooden shoes), led by a teacher to some park or playground to play and romp for an hour or so. The teacher either joins in



the games, or at any rate stays to watch that no harm is done, and on a signal the children obediently group themselves as they came and return to school.

Little girls have always to wear black pinafores at school to keep their dresses from getting bespattered with ink, and to make them, while

at school, look alike. It is a kind of uniform that all wear, so that none shall outshine the others by finer dresses, and also to prevent their thoughts from wandering from their lessons to their clothes. For the same reason, perhaps, the black dress is chosen for universal wear for young ladies in some boarding schools.

Sunday is the great day for amusement here, as in all European countries. The streets, parks, and woods are crowded on that day. Every one has been busy during the week; so on Sunday, after having attended church, which they do regularly, all the family turn out, often taking their food with them to the woods and spending the remainder of the day in the open air.

The summer time is perhaps the happiest time for children as well as for the grown folks, because it brings the "kirmess," a kind of Flemish fair which is held at different times throughout the country.

On some open place in city or village quite a little town of booths and tents is erected. There you find merry-go-rounds, Russian slides, roller coasts, menageries, wonderful exhibitions of all sorts of curious things and animals.

Scenes in Belgium

The crowd of eager people is immense every day; and many save up all their spare money for a whole year in order to spend it at the kirmess. They enjoy themselves far better there than at a more costly entertainment; in fact, the great success of the fair is due to the low price asked for the different shows. It is indeed a true people's festival, and it is pleasant to see their thorough enjoyment.

With such simple, childlike amusements young and old are satisfied. The father goes with his family to join in the pleasure. He may not have the restless activity of the American, but he allows himself time to enjoy life with his wife and children as he goes along, and rests contented with a simple lot.

One thing that would seem strange to you on coming here would be to see little children begging in the streets. Some are sent begging by parents who are too lazy to work, and in such cases a regular business is made of it; but there are others who beg even when they do not need alms. They will run beside your carriage or trot along by your side, asking in a woe-begone voice for "*charité ! un petit sou !*" ("charity! a little

penny!"). If you pay no attention to them they will, after a while, stay behind, change manner and tone completely, perhaps make faces at you, and go on laughingly with their games.



If you let your heart be touched,— which you are sorely tempted to do by their heartrending voice and entreaty, and their dirty, ragged, and hungry look,— they will as likely as not take the money you give them to the nearest candy store and spend it in sweets, or buy ciga-

rettes and make themselves sick.

Politeness is one of the pleasing traits of children in Belgium. They are taught from earliest childhood to be polite, and they never forget it. Wherever you go, everybody is well-mannered and obliging. In shops one always receives polite

Scenes in Belgium

thanks and an earnest entreaty to come again, even if one has bought nothing.

On the roads in the country the peasants always wish you good day, and the men take off their hats. When a funeral passes on the street, every man and boy takes off his hat; this is called *salut à la mort* ("salute to the dead").

Children have to make themselves useful, too. After school hours they help in the business, or tend and care for the younger children, or work in the fields. Frequently you see them take the produce of the farm to the city in little green carts drawn by dogs. Milk is brought every morning in shining brass cans set in straw in the little cart, which is painted bright green and attended by a girl in a clean dress, blue apron, and wooden shoes, with nothing on her head, winter or summer. The dog is hitched to this cart like a horse, with a pretty little harness studded with brass nails.

I should like to tell you a great deal more about this country, but that would overstep the limits of my letter.

E. H. TERRELL.

A PEOPLE ON STILTS

THE achievement of Sylvain Dornon, a Frenchman of the region known as The Landes, who made a journey on stilts from Paris to Moscow in fifty-eight days, brought into notice the very considerable use which the people of The Landes make of stilts.

The Landes is that part of France bordering upon the Bay of Biscay, south and west of Bordeaux. Formerly it was almost wholly composed of flat, dreary wastes, the surface of which consisted mainly of shifting sands, though a subsoil of clay caused the rainfall to remain in pools.

Some grass and bushes grew upon The Landes, and the inhabitants lived by pasturing cattle and sheep.

To travel over these half-sandy, half-watery wastes, the people employed stilts, and became remarkably expert both in their construction and in their use.

A People on Stilts



These implements are called by the people of The Landes *chanques*, which signifies, in their dialect, "long legs." They are long sticks which are provided, at a height of about five feet, with a support or stirrup for the foot. The upper end of the stick is flattened at the sides, and bound to the leg by means of a stout strap.

At the lower end the stick expands into a sort of button, somewhat like the bulging end of an Indian hunting arrow. Often this is finished off by a bottom made of bone.

Mounted upon these stilts, The Landes shepherd carries in his hand a long staff, which serves several uses. By means of it he mounts to his place on his stilts. He uses it as a "crook," in driving or guiding his sheep. He nails a small board across its end, and thrusting the lower end into the ground at the proper angle, sits comfortably down upon the board, still mounted on his stilts.

Reposing in this fashion, the shepherd appears to be seated upon a gigantic three-legged stool. By the aid of his apparatus he can rest, dry-shod and comfortable, in the midst of a large shallow pond, in a snow bank, or anywhere else where he can find footing.

Thus seated, the shepherd takes out his knitting work, which he carries in his girdle while walking, and busies himself at knitting while his flocks graze. It is no derogation to the dignity of a man to knit, in Gascony.

The shepherd's ordinary costume consists of a sort of great waistcoat,—or sleeveless garment of sheepskin, which hangs almost to his feet,—trousers, cloth gaiters, a knitted cap or a broad-brimmed hat.

Generally he carries a gun strapped upon his back, with which to defend his flocks from the attacks of wolves. Sometimes he carries also a little stove, upon which to cook his food.

Mounted on their stilts, the shepherds of The Landes drive their flocks and herds across the country, marching through the thickets, straight over puddles of water, and crossing marshes without taking the trouble to look for paths. Their elevation, moreover, enables them to overlook easily their large flocks, which are often scattered over a wide extent of country.

The mounting of the stilts is usually accomplished in the morning once for all, from a ladder placed against the house, or from some other

elevation. However, the stilt walker is able to get upon his stilts at any time, and from the level ground, by the aid of his staff.

The men of The Landes acquire great skill in the use of stilts. They fall very rarely and are able to stand still without support, to run with great swiftness, and even to pick up a stone or a flower from the ground without getting down. They can hop upon one foot, and occasionally they frighten strangers by appearing to fall to the ground, saving themselves by a quick movement before they strike the earth.

The speed with which they travel is quite remarkable. In 1808, when the Empress Josephine made a visit to Bayonne, the municipality sent to meet her an escort of young stilt walkers of The Landes. On the return they followed the carriages; and though the horses attached to the imperial conveyances were driven at a rapid trot, the stilt walkers were able to keep up with them for the entire distance.

During the empress's sojourn at the town, the shepherds, on their stilts, afforded the ladies of the court a great deal of amusement by their feats of agility. They ran races and picked up

A People on Stilts

pieces of money thrown to them, rushing together in a mass as they did so and getting many falls, which they did not seem to mind in the least.

At the present day there are few fairs or celebrations in the villages of Gascony without stilt races. A prize, generally consisting of a gun, a sheep, or a fine fowl, is given to the winner.

The Landes shepherds are not only able to perform feats of agility on their stilts, but can travel long distances without great fatigue. The illustration shows Dornon on his march from Paris to St. Petersburg. It is taken from the French journal *La Nature*, which had a long article on The Landes stilt walkers.

Formerly, on market days in Bordeaux or Bayonne, long processions of peasants on stilts were to be seen entering the town, often bearing heavy bags and baskets laden with farm products for sale. These men had come from villages ten, fifteen, or even twenty leagues away, and must return the same distance on their stilts after the day's marketing was over.

Within recent years the face of The Landes and the habits of the people have greatly changed. Systematic tree planting has held the shifting

Northern Europe

sands of the barrens and transformed a vast extent of country from grazing to agricultural and vine-growing land. Wastes which were totally uninhabited before are now the sites of prosperous farms and villages.

All this has been of great benefit to the people of The Landes, but it has rendered stilt walking much less common because less necessary than before. Instead of going to market on stilts, the people go in wagons or on a railroad train, and a man walking on stilts is now almost as rare a sight in the streets of Bordeaux as in those of Paris or New York. In the country districts, however, many of the people still cling to stilt locomotion.

JEAN BERTRAND.

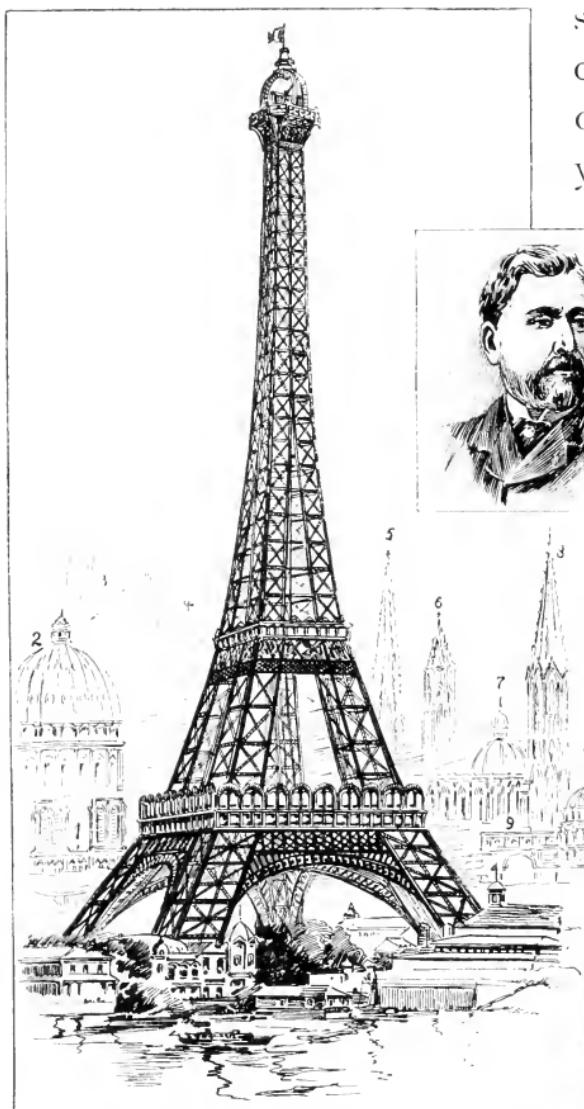
THE EIFFEL TOWER

CLASSIC history records the fate of the giants who attempted to scale the heights of the empyrean by piling Mount Ossa upon Mount Pelion. Sacred history, too, recounts the discomfiture of the builders of the Tower of Babel.

Unterrified by these tales, that bold Frenchman, M. Gustave Eiffel, had the hardihood to plan an iron tower, three hundred meters—nine hundred and eighty-four feet—in height, and succeeded in building it, quite without accident and to the immense satisfaction and pride of the French people.

Of all obelisks and spires now standing, the Eiffel is easily chief, surpassing by more than five hundred feet the height of the great pyramid of Egypt.

If the Washington monument at our own national capital were to have placed upon its summit the Bunker Hill shaft, and still above this the lofty Baltimore monument were to be



superadded, the combined heights of all three would yet fall short fifty feet of the stately *campanile* of the Eiffel tower, overwhich the great electric candle now nightly sends forth its far-reaching beam.

None of the lofty cathedral towers of mediæval architecture are half so high as this structure.



The Eiffel Tower

The tower is of iron, resting upon stone foundations, sunk to the depth of forty-five feet on the side next to the river, and twenty-five feet on the land side. More than seven thousand tons of iron were used in the mazy network of girders, beams, rods, braces, and rivets of the superstructure.

The four enormous arches, which spring from corner to corner of the foundation pillars, span an area of fully two acres of ground,—a space where one may walk about and never think of the great tower overhead, unless he chances to glance upward.

But these facts and figures, which have often been repeated, convey but a meager picture of the real aspect and grandeur of the great tower itself.

Unlike most of the celebrated obelisks and towers, the Eiffel is designed to be something more than a mere monument. Aside from its scientific uses, its purpose is recreation and pleasure rather than commemoration. In furtherance of this design, three platforms, or stages, have been constructed within it, one above another, to all of which the public are admitted upon payment of a moderate fee.

The first platform, or stage, is placed directly above the four great iron arches which unite the corner pillars, and at a height of two hundred and twenty-five feet,—about that of the Bunker Hill monument. Two powerful elevators, each capable of containing fifty persons, carry up visitors. Any one may climb up by a winding staircase, but the fee must be paid whether one climbs or rides.

Reaching the floor of the first stage, one finds himself in the midst of a pretty village of restaurants and shops, and may forget, for the time being, that he is so far above the earth's surface. It is only when he chances to emerge upon the long galleries, on the outer sides of the stage, which command a view of the city, that he fully realizes his exalted situation.

Some idea of the size and extent of this stage may be obtained when the fact is stated that the restaurants and cafés here will accommodate one thousand six hundred persons at one time, and that six thousand people may be present upon it, and move about without being too much crowded. It is estimated, indeed, that ten thousand people may be on the various stages and stairways of the tower at the same time.

The Eiffel Tower

The second stage, or platform, is placed one hundred and seventy-five feet higher in the tower, or nearly four hundred feet from the earth. At this height the visitor is free from the dust and heat of the summer day beneath, and can, if he chooses, hire an opera glass and view all Paris at his leisure.

Like a shining ribbon, winding through the city, flows the Seine, speckled with steamers and spanned by half a score of broad stone bridges. Just across it, on the high ground to the north-west, rises the great Trocadero Palace, with its lofty towers, immensely long wings, and superb grounds.

Beyond stretches away the great green park of the Bois de Boulogne, while a little farther around to the right, and nearer, is the grand Arc de Triomphe, which commemorates the victories of the French nation over foreign enemies.

Still farther around to the north and east, and near the Seine, is the Place de la Concorde, the scene of so many stirring and often terrible events in the annals of Paris. In the same direction, but beyond, are visible the classic roof and columns of the church of the Madeleine,

in the architectural style of the Athenian Parthenon, also the new Grand Opera and the top of the Column Vendome, the latter cast from Austrian cannon, captured mainly at Austerlitz by Napoleon I.

Farther along the Seine to the east are the gardens of the Tuileries, the famous Fine Arts Museum of the Louvre, Notre Dame cathedral, the Hôtel de Ville, Tour St. Jacques, and the French Institute.

Almost in line from the corner of the south pillar of the Eiffel are the palace and the gardens of the Luxembourg, also the Pantheon and St. Sulpice church; while nearer at hand, directly beneath the eye, glows the richly gilded dome of the Invalides, beneath which Napoleon I and his three brothers lie buried in regal magnificence.

A hydraulic lift carries visitors up from the second to the third and highest stage, a distance of almost five hundred feet. One is apt to experience a humming of the ears, and perhaps feel sudden, sharp pains in the head, both in ascending and descending. We are now nine hundred feet from the earth, and the city is spread out around us.

The Eiffel Tower

Paris, from Mont Valérien to Montmartre, looks like a map at our feet, and far out beyond the city limits, fertile, green France can be seen — if the day be clear — stretching away to the shining sea on the far-off horizon.

Persons subject to vertigo are apt to be unpleasantly affected by the ascent, or by the first look around from this lofty stage. After a single glance, some wish to descend at once. Although curiosity may incite thousands to make the ascent, it is safe to say that there are few who will not draw a long breath of relief, not unmixed with thankfulness, on finding themselves safe down to earth again. The general public are permitted to ascend no higher than the third stage; but from this platform a spiral staircase leads upward still to the *campanile* and to the extreme upper portion of the tower, which contains the large composite lantern for the electric light.

The *campanile* consists of several small rooms set apart especially for scientific purposes. The lantern is a complex arrangement of glasses for reflecting and refracting the light, similar to those made use of in lighthouses of the first class.

The dynamo for the production of the light is placed in the basement of the south pillar of the tower, and the light itself is of between five and six thousand candle power, which the reflectors of the lantern augment to not far from seventy thousand candle power.

By means of a revolving drum of colored glass the lantern is made to give forth, alternately, the three colors of the national bunting,—blue, white, and red,—and it is said that the white light can be seen from vessels in the British Channel.

The tower is otherwise lighted by hundreds of gas jets and smaller electric lanterns, and presents by night a very beautiful appearance.

C. A. STEPHENS.

ON THE QUICKSANDS

WE had been spending the month of August in the quaint old Norman town of Granville. Granville is on the northern coast of France, a few miles north of the head of the bay at the mouth of which are the islands of Guernsey and Jersey.

One day we planned a visit to Mont St. Michel, a tiny island that lies at the very angle of the two shore lines that form the bay.

Having breakfasted very early we took our places upon the top of the old *diligence*, as the French call a stagecoach. The driver cracked his whip, and off the four horses started on a run, which subsided into a steady trot as we left the town. The beach over which we were passing was firm and hard at the high-tide level, and we kept closely to the coast, only occasionally diverging for a short cut across country.

Just after eleven o'clock we arrived at the old coast town of Genet, where we dismounted at the garden of the principal inn.

The innkeeper's wife came smilingly forward to greet us, her face red and shining, her cap—with the high, full back and long tabs pinned across the top to form gables—snowy white, and her sabots clattering over the stones with a friendly sound.

On hearing that we were on the way to St. Michel, she affected the greatest concern, for, she said, the best guide which Genet afforded would not return for one little hour; also the tide was not yet far enough out; but—if the gentlemen and ladies would honor her with their company to dinner, she could assure them that by midday they should be possessed of the finest equipage and the best guide, and could go on their way refreshed.

We spent the half hour while dinner was preparing in reading the epitaphs in the churchyard of the ancient church, half of which was built by the French and the other half by the English.

Then appeared a small urchin, in a very blue blouse, to announce to us that our luncheon was served. We were ushered into a barnlike room, where the rafters were hung with dried meats, fruits, and herbs. A huge fire was built on the

On the Quicksands

stone floor in one corner, and along the side ran the long oak table on which our luncheon was spread,—and we found it as good as had been promised.

True to our hostess's prediction, just as the clock struck twelve, the rumbling of wheels stopped at the gate and the inn door was flung open by a man who presented himself as our guide. He was a slim, keen-faced man, tanned to almost the color of an Arab. He had a peculiarly quick, alert look, which immediately inspired confidence. He wished us good day, and in a ceremonious manner placed himself at our service and informed us that all was in readiness for our departure.

We found, drawn up before the gate, an equipage which very much astonished us. I can liken it to nothing but a well-built dump cart. It was high, and rested on two broad wheels, but the seats were arranged like those of a wagonette. Two horses were to be driven tandem, much to our delight.

Molly was in such high spirits that it was with some difficulty that we induced her to take her seat quietly by the side of the Fräulein, our

German maid. Dick volunteered to help keep Molly in order, while Carrie and I sat opposite them with Cousin Charley. Monsieur Beaumont, our landlord, was on the front seat with the driver.

The guide picked up an implement which we dubbed Neptune's trident, and stood on the step of the wagon, thus completing a fanciful picture.

Madame came out to bid us *au revoir*, as did all the inmates of the inn, and every man, woman, child, and baby along our route crowded to the doors and windows to see us pass.

We soon came to the coast, and as we paused for the guide and driver to make a few final preparations, I will remind you that the tides on the coast of Normandy rise much higher than those on the American coast. The ordinary height of tides on the Atlantic, except where it is influenced by the Bay of Fundy, averages from four to nine feet. The tide on the coast where we were then waiting rises from forty-five to sixty feet; so that, though at high tide Mont St. Michel is three miles out at sea, at low tide it is surrounded by a vast plain of sand.

Again, the sand is not like that of which boys on our coast have built so many forts and houses,

On the Quicksands

for it is what is called quicksand — sand so mixed with water that it is unable to bear the weight of a body, and so shifting that it alters with every turn of the tide. Therefore, a new road to the island must be found each day; hence the necessity of a guide.

Now, however, we were ready to start. We saw that both guide and driver had rolled up their trousers as far as possible, and had placed their shoes in the wagon. The guide was already leaping on in front of us. In this manner we proceeded across the quicksands.

The guide kept about an eighth of a mile in advance. His trident was attached by a rope to his broad, strong belt. He would fling the trident to the length of the rope, and, if satisfied, would follow; if, however, the trident sank too quickly or too deep, he would jerk it back and try again in another direction.

He was a swift runner, and in this way our horses were able to follow at a steady trot. The driver, meanwhile, ran by the side of the wagon and urged on the horses by voice and lash. The wheels appeared to sink about a foot into the sand, and once, when Dick got out to try running,

he caught hold of the wagon again as quickly as possible, saying that he felt the strangest sensation, as if he had been running on water; that one part of his foot would sink, while the sands would rise under the other part.

We asked the driver innumerable questions at first, among others, how "quick" the sand was; and he answered that if the wagon with us in it should stand in one spot for an hour and a half it would sink so that not even the lash of the long whip—which then stood in its socket—would be left above the sands.

The sun was very hot and oppressive, and every ray was reflected from the gleaming sands below.

The only thing which happened to break the monotony of the ride was fording the little river which comes down from Avranches. There, in mid-water, we stopped to rest the horses for a few moments, and to take a long look at the island, which grew in grandeur as we neared it. We could see that its foundations were huge walls of rock, above which clustered the low stone houses peculiar to that part of the country; but the top of the mountain is crowned by a

On the Quicksands

beautiful monastery, whose pinnacles and towers seemed to pierce the sky. Then on we went again till we made a final dash up the steep incline into the open gates of this unique little town.

We drove directly to the Lion d'Or, and after a little rest on an old oaken settle, in the quiet, well-sanded living room of the inn, we proceeded, under the guidance of an old monk, to mount the narrow, steep path to the monastery gates, which, after much ceremony and showing of passes, we were allowed to enter.

As the one little street which crossed the center of the island was not wide enough to admit of our driver's making one of the sweeping turns in which he delighted, the horses were detached, and the wagon and horses were turned separately. Then we started on our homeward way.

A cool breeze had sprung up, and the sun's rays did not seem so powerful as on our outward journey. We were in high spirits, and were singing college songs, when suddenly we heard a faint cry. In an instant every face was sobered, every voice was hushed. We knew that some one must be in deadly peril.

Again, over the sands, came the same faint but agonized cry for help. Our guide came running back, his face pale with excitement.

In a few words he explained to us that through his glass he could see two figures, in the direction from which the cry had come; also their great danger. We had left the island so promptly that we would have time to go to the help of these people before the tide came in, and it was their only hope of safety. Of course we told him to do everything that could possibly be done to save them.

Off he started, calling to our driver to follow rapidly. We were startled to find that we must go toward the sea, but all fear was forgotten in our anxiety to save the two fellow-creatures in peril, whose cries were growing more and more distinct, and more heartrending. Our guide frequently had to alter his course, so that it seemed ages before we could even distinguish the figures.

Soon, however, we discovered them to be two girls, one of whom had already sunk into the treacherous sand above her knees; the other, a little child of not more than six or seven years, was seated upon the older girl's shoulder, her

On the Quicksands

arms clasped tightly about her neck. It seemed to us that we could see them slowly sinking, deeper and deeper, into the sand, and it was horrible to think that we could not rush to their aid,



but must calmly wait and trust everything to the wisdom of our guide.

I am sure that each of us offered a silent prayer that God would direct him. As soon as the girls could hear him, he shouted to them to keep up brave hearts, for, with God's help, he would save them. Then back he ran to us.

You must remember that all this time it was necessary for us to keep moving that we also might not sink. The guide now rapidly explained how far it would be safe for us to go forward, after which we must make a semicircle around them, turning and going backward and forward over the same ground, as it would be unsafe to try a new one.

He then fastened one end of the long rope, which we had noticed in the bottom of the wagon, by tying it around the front seat and letting it run between us and out at the back of the wagon. The other end he attached to his belt, after unfastening the trident, which he left with us. It did not take him as long to do this as it has taken me to describe his method, and he was soon running toward the unfortunate girls.

We were now near enough to see them distinctly, and the tears came to our eyes when we saw that the poor little child was standing on the shoulders of the older girl, whose white arms held her firmly. The sands now reached to her waist, and yet we could hear that the cries for help all came from the little one, while a low, soothing undertone told us that she was being comforted

On the Quicksands

and reassured by the other, whose strong arms, raised above her head, never trembled, but held the little one securely in place.

As the guide neared them, we heard the cry:



“Save Babette! Never mind me, but oh, save Babette!”

Now came a desperate struggle for life. The added weight of the guide caused the sand to rise higher and higher around the girl. We held our

breath in suspense. Could they be saved? And even if little Babette were safely tied to the rope above where it was fastened to the guide's belt, how could he save the older girl, whose arms, now that the child had been taken from her shoulders, had dropped, seemingly lifeless, on the sands before her. We could see that she had fainted.

All this time we were circling nearer the spot where our interest was centered; nearer, so that the rope might be loosened; and now we saw that the little girl was securely fastened to the rope, but that the guide was more than knee-deep in the gleaming sand, which was bubbling and boiling around us, showing that the tide had turned and was fast approaching.

Then came the final struggle. The guide leaned forward and grasped the older girl by flinging his arms around her just under her arms; then shouted, in tones which convinced us that on this move rested the fate of all three, "To the river, quick!"

We all grasped the rope, fearing to trust the knots alone; and though the horses turned, there was a moment in which they seemed to lose their footing and were unable to stir.

On the Quicksands

The driver, who had been on the seat for some time, now leaped to the ground and used his whip and lungs vigorously, at the same time tugging at the bridle of the forward horse.

It was a moment of terrible suspense; all depended upon the horses, for the rope was strong, and we knew that two of those to be saved were securely fastened to it, while the guide was holding to the girl with a grasp like death.

It seemed as if the horses knew how much depended upon them, for, in spite of their slipping and sinking footsteps, they succeeded in moving forward, and soon we saw the girl gently drawn from her living grave; the sand closed instantly behind her and left no trace of the dreadful struggle.

On, on we went, the sands casting up little spouts of water all around us, and the wheels sinking halfway to the hubs. Now our only dread was that the older girl could not be brought out of the long fainting fit.

The little one was clinging wildly to the rope, sobbing pitifully and calling, "Sister, sister, open your eyes and look at me!" The guide held

firmly to the girl; he did not attempt to regain his footing, but was dragged backward over the sand.

After what seemed to us hours, we reached the river which comes down from Avranches. Here, on the pebbly bottom, it was safe for us to come to a standstill. Then we all pulled on the rope, and it required our combined strength to draw to us the three figures who were so unable to help themselves; but strength was given us, and nearer and nearer they came, until they were at the edge of the river.

The driver then waded to the shore, took Babette in his arms and cut the rope, that no time might be lost. She clung to him, sobbing, and with many comforting words he brought her to the wagon, where we received her. She soon cuddled down, exhausted, in the Fräulein's lap, and we hastened to draw in the rope, and to pile our wraps into the bottom of the wagonette.

On looking back, we saw the driver just lifting the older sister from the arms of the guide, who then struggled to his feet, and, with the driver, bore the still unconscious girl to the place we had prepared for her.

On the Quicksands

There was no time to stop to revive her, for we could already see the line of surf, which was steadily gaining upon us, and we had still two miles to go. So we hurriedly dipped our handkerchiefs into the river, the guide splashed his face vigorously, caught his trident from the wagon, and on he went, not stopping for one moment's rest after his almost superhuman exertions. Babette still sobbed in the Fräulein's arms, always calling to her sister that she was safe, and begging her to speak.

The rest of us bent all our energies to call the older sister back to life. We bathed her face and chafed her hands, and were presently rewarded by seeing her open her eyes.

She was trying to speak, and, looking into our strange faces, gasped, "The sands are creeping higher and higher. Tell mother not to grieve for me, for I saved Babette." Then she sank back into an unconscious state, from which we could not again arouse her.

All this time we were racing with the tide; the horses and men were tired, but on they sped. We could hear the water in the sands beneath us, and the white surf line came nearer and nearer,

until it seemed as if the waves were breaking just behind us.

On, on we went. The voice of the waters seemed to put new life into the horses, who pricked up their ears, dashed forward, and finally landed us safely upon the coast.

There an anxious crowd had assembled to watch our race with the tide. As the people gathered around to hear why we had so long delayed our return, a cry of "Mamma!" was heard, and a comely peasant woman elbowed her way through the crowd to the side of the wagon, and caught Babette in her arms. Then, seeing the white face among us, she screamed, "Jeanne, my daughter! Give her to me!"

Of course we hastened to explain matters, and in return she told us how Jeanne had raised a beautiful white lily, and was taking it as an offering to "Our Lady of the Flowers" at the monastery.

They had warned her that she might lose her way, but she had been quite sure that she could find a safe path, with the result which we have seen.

During this recital the mother had led the way to their little cottage, where we left them.

On the Quicksands

After supper we hastened back to see again the two girls with whom fate had so closely linked us that afternoon.

Little Babette, looking rosy and sweet in a fresh pinafore, ran to meet us, and led us to Jeanne, who was sitting on the doorstep, leaning back against the door, the lower half of which was closed. She smiled a welcome, being still too weak to talk.

We congratulated the mother upon having such a noble daughter, but no words could express the admiration we felt for this girl, who had bravely held up her little sister to be saved, while she slowly sank into what she felt to be certain death.

LUCY C. KELLOGG.

LIFE IN THE ALPS

I

SWITZERLAND is made up of a number of cantons, which are subdivided into communes, each possessing its own president and council, and making its own local laws. The communal laws are, however, subject to the revision of the cantonal government. I live, for instance, in the commune of Naters. The sale of the land on which our chalet stands was first agreed to by the vote of the assembled burghers of the commune; but their vote had to be afterwards ratified by the "high government" of Sion, the chief town of the canton. Naters, the name of the commune, is also the name of its principal village.

I had the honor, this year, of being unanimously elected an honorary burgher of the commune. This confers upon me certain rights and privileges not previously enjoyed. I can, if I please, pasture cows upon the alps—a name



U. L. Taylor

given by the inhabitants, not to the snow-capped mountains, but to the grassy slopes stretching far below the snows. I am also entitled to a certain allowance of fuel from the pine woods. Finally, I can build a châlet on the communal ground.

I have called it a châlet, but it is by no means one of the picturesque wooden edifices to which this term is usually applied. It has to bear, at times, the pressure of a mighty mass of snow. The walls are therefore built of stone and are very thick.

I could give you many illustrations of the breakages produced by snow pressure, but one will suffice.

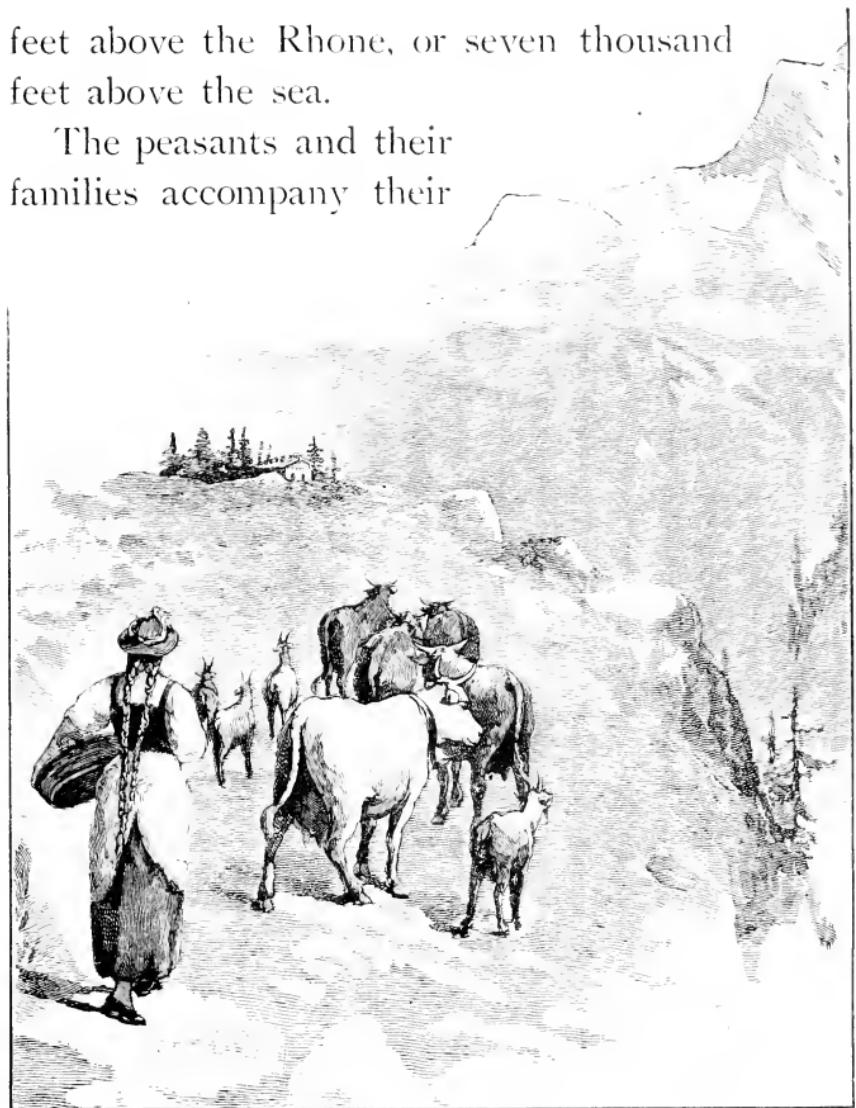
Our kitchen chimney rises from the roof near the eaves, and the pressure of the snow lying on the roof above it was once so great as to shear away the chimney and land it bodily upon the snowdrift underneath. Once, indeed, to obtain entrance to our kitchen, we had to cut a staircase of six steps in the drift at the back of the house.

Toward the end of June the flocks and herds are driven to the upper pastures, private ownership ceasing and communal rights, as to grazing, beginning at an elevation of about four thousand

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feet above the Rhone, or seven thousand feet above the sea.

The peasants and their families accompany their



living property, remaining for two or three months in huts built expressly with a view to their annual migration. Nearly all of them move

into Naters for the winter; but we remain alone, amid the solemn silence of the hills, three weeks or a month after the peasants have disappeared. Their time of disappearance depends upon the exhaustion of the pasturage. Many of them have intermediate huts and bits of land between Naters and their highest dwellings, and the possessors of such huts descend by successive steps to the valley.

Snow falls, of course, for the most part, in winter; but the exact period at which it falls is not to be predicted. A winter may pass with scarcely any snow, while in early spring it may fall in immense quantities. Then follows a time of avalanches, when the snow, detaching itself from the steep mountain sides, shoots downward with destructive energy.

I have seen snow here in midsummer, so heavy that the herds had to be driven a long way down to get a little pasture. Three or four years ago a fall of unequaled severity began on the night of the 12th of September. There was a brief respite of sunshine, during which the peasants, had they been wise, might have brought down their flocks. But they failed to do so. Snowing

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recommended, the sheep were caught upon the mountains, and for a long time they could not be reached by their owners. Many of them perished.

For thirteen days the chief portion of the flock remained unaccounted for. During all this time the animals were without food, and, indeed, were given up for lost. Nearly two hundred of them, however, were afterwards discovered alive, and driven down to the Bel Alp. I saw them arrive after their long fast, and they seemed perfectly brisk and cheerful. Some of them were entirely bare of wool, the covering having been eaten off their backs by their famishing companions. I have been assured that all the sheep that indulged in this nutriment died, balls of undigested wool being found in their stomachs afterwards.

Avalanches were frequent at the time here referred to, and by them numbers of the sheep on the lower slopes were swept away.

It is only those burghers who are comparatively well off that ascend to the higher grazing grounds. Even they seem to find the struggle for existence a hard one. Two or three cows and a few sheep or goats constitute, in fairly

well-to-do cases, the burgher's movable wealth, while the land privately owned is divided into very small parcels.

The peasants' huts, built for the most part of pine logs, richly colored by the oxidizing action of the sun, are not always wholesome. The upper part of every hut is divided into two dwelling rooms, one for sleeping and the other for cooking and other purposes. The single sleeping room is often occupied by a numerous family, space being obtained by placing one bed above another, like the berths in a ship. There is no chimney, the smoke escaping through apertures in the roof.

In our neighborhood the roofs are usually formed of flags obtained from a rock capable of cleavage. The sleeping room is always over the cow shed, this position being chosen for the sake of warmth. Through chinks in the floor the sleepers obtain not only warmth, but often air that has passed through the lungs of the animals underneath. The result, as regards health, is not satisfactory; the women and children suffer most. Were it not that the contaminated respiration of the night is neutralized by outdoor life

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During the day, the result would be still less satisfactory.



As I write, a rush, followed by a heavy thud, outside, informs me that a mass of snow has shot,

from the southern slope of our roof, down upon our terrace. This reminds me to tell you something more about the avalanches which are such frequent destroyers of life in the Alps. Whole villages, imprudently situated, are from time to time overwhelmed. We had an eye to this danger when we chose the terrace on which our cottage is built.

Climbers and their guides are not infrequently carried away by avalanches, and many a brave man lies at the present moment undiscovered in their débris. Some years ago a famous guide and favorite companion of mine was lost through allowing himself to be persuaded to attempt a mountain which he considered unsafe.

Falling stones constitute another serious and frequently fatal danger in the Alps; and here the goats, which roam about the upper slopes and gullies, often play a mischievous part. I once witnessed an incident of this kind.

I was accompanied at the time by a friend and his son. A herd of goats was observed browsing on the heights above us. Suddenly an ominous tapping was heard overhead, and, looking up, I saw a stone in the air. Whenever it

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touched the ground it was deflected, so that from the direction of the stone at any moment it was difficult to infer its final direction.

I called out to my friend, "Beware of the stone!" and he, turning toward his son, repeated

the warning. It had scarcely quitted his lips when the missile plunged down upon him. He fell with a shout, and I was instantly at his side. The stone had struck the calf of his leg, embedding one of its angles in the flesh, and inflicting a very ugly wound.

Slipping in perilous places is the most fruitful cause of Alpine disaster. It is usual for climbers to rope themselves together, and the English Alpine Club has taken every pains to produce ropes of the soundest material and the best workmanship.



The rope is tied around the waist, or is fastened to a belt clasping the waist, of each climber. The rope is an indispensable accompaniment of Alpine climbing, and no competent mountaineer will recommend its abandonment. Prudence, however, is necessary in the use of it. The men tied together ought to be few in number. A party of three or four, including the guide or guides, is, in my opinion, large enough. In a numerous party there is a temptation to distribute responsibility, each individual tending to rely too much upon the others; while in a small party the mind of each man is concentrated on the precautions necessary for safety.

II

On still, sunny summer days, the heat is great and relaxing. This is the time to seek the adjacent glacier, down which a torrent of bracing air rolls daily. We have also our due share of thunderstorms, when the peals, sometimes breaking close to us, retreat in deafening echoes and die away amid the rocky halls of the mountains.

In this respect, however, we are far better off

than our neighbors in northern Italy, whose hills, acting as lightning conductors, partially drain the clouds of their electricity before we receive the shots of their “red artillery.” We can see from our mountain perch the wonderful “thrilling” of these Italian thunderstorms, beyond the great mountain range at the farther side of the valley of the Rhone.

On the fine October morning when these lines are written, we find ourselves surrounded everywhere by glittering snow. The riven glacier and its flanking mountains are dazzling in their whiteness. After a period of superb weather, streaks and wisps of boding cloud made their appearance a few days ago. They spread, became denser, and finally discharged themselves in a heavy fall of snow.

But the sunshine rapidly recovered its ascendancy, and the peasants, who had already descended some distance with their cows and sheep, hoped two days of such warmth would again clear their pastures.

They were deceived, for yesterday the snow fell steadily and almost constantly. It interrupted the transport of our firewood, on mules’ backs,

from the pine woods nearly one thousand feet below us. This morning, however, I opened the glass door of our little sitting room, which faces south, and stepped out upon our terrace. About one thousand five hundred feet below us the white covering came to an end, while, beyond this, sunny green pastures descended to the valley of the Rhone. To the north the peaks grouped themselves round the massive Aletschhorn, the second in height among these Oberland Mountains. Over the Aletschhorn the sky was clear, which is one of the surest signs of fine weather. On a morning as fair and exhilarating as the present one, but earlier in the year, from the top of the Aletschhorn — a height of fourteen thousand feet — I once looked down upon the summit of the Jungfrau.

One striking feature invariably reveals itself here at the end of September and beginning of October. From the terrace of our cottage we look down upon a basin vast and grand, at the bottom of which stands the town of Brieg. Over Brieg the line of vision carries us to the Simplon Pass and the mountains right and left of it. Naters stands in a great gap of the mountains,

Life in the Alps

where meadows and pine-clad knolls stretch, with great variety of contour, up to the higher Alpine pastures. The basin has no regularly rounded rim but runs into irregular bays and estuaries, continuous with the great valley of the Rhone.

At the period referred to, valley, basin, bays, and estuaries are frequently filled by a cloud, the surface of which seems, at times, as level as the unruffled surface of the ocean. A night or two ago I looked down upon such a sea of cloud, as it gleamed in the light of a brilliant moon. Above the shining sea rose the solemn mountains, overarched by the cloudless sky.

As I write, a firmament of undimmed azure shuts out the view into stellar space. No trace of cloud is visible; and yet the substance from which clouds are made is, at this moment, mixed copiously with the transparent air. That substance is the vapor of water; and I take this beautiful day as an illustration to impress upon you the fact that water vapor is not a thing that can be seen in the air. Were the atmosphere above and around me at the present moment suddenly chilled, visible clouds would be formed by the precipitation of vapor now invisible.

Some years ago I stood upon the roof of the great cathedral of Milan. The air over the plains of Lombardy was then as pure and transparent as it is here to-day. From the cathedral roof the snowy Alps are to be seen, and on the occasion to which I refer a light wind blew towards them.

When this air, so pure and transparent as long as the sunny plains of Lombardy were underneath to warm it, reached the cold Alps and was tilted up their sides, the aqueous vapor it contained was precipitated into clouds of scowling blackness.

If you pour cold water into a tumbler on a fine summer day, a dimness will be immediately produced by the conversion into water, on the outside surface of the glass, of the aqueous vapor of the surrounding air. Pushing the experiment still further, you may fill a suitable vessel with a mixture of ice and salt, which is colder than the coldest water. On the hottest day in summer a thick fur of hoar frost is thus readily produced on the chilled surface of the vessel.

The quantity of vapor which the atmosphere contains varies from day to day. In England, northeasterly winds bring us dry air, because the wind, before reaching us, has passed over vast

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distances of dry ground. Southwesterly winds, on the other hand, come charged with the vapor contracted during their passage over vast tracts of ocean. Such winds, in England, produce the heaviest rains.

And now we approach a question of very great interest. The condensed vapor which reaches the lowlands as rain, falls usually upon the summits as snow. To a resident among the Alps it is interesting to observe, the morning after a night's heavy rain, a limit sharply drawn, at the same level along the sides of the mountains, above which they are covered with snow, while below it no snow is to be seen. This limit marks the passage from snow to rain.

To the mountain snow all the glaciers of the Alps owe their existence. By ordinary mechanical pressure snow can be converted into solid ice; and, partly by its own pressure, partly by the freezing of infiltrated water, the snow of the mountains is converted into the ice of the glaciers.

The great glaciers, such as the one now below me, have all large gathering grounds, great basins or branches where the snow collects and becomes gradually compacted to ice. Partly by the yielding

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of its own mass, and partly by sliding over its bed, this ice moves downwards like a river.

We may go further and affirm, with a distinguished writer on this subject, that "between a glacier and a river there is a resemblance so complete that it would be impossible to find in the latter a peculiarity of motion which does not exist in the former."

It has been proved that, owing to the friction of its sides, which holds the ice back, the motion of a glacier is swiftest at its center; that, because of the friction against its bed, the surface of a glacier moves more rapidly than its bottom; that, when the valley through which the glacier moves is not straight, but curved, the point of swiftest motion is shifted from its center towards the concave side of the valley. All these facts hold equally good for a river.

It is easy to understand that, with a substance like glacier ice, tensions must occur which will break up the ice, forming clefts or fissures to relieve the strains. The crevasses of glaciers are thus produced.

JOHN TYNDALL.

AN OPEN-AIR PARLIAMENT

ON Sunday, the 24th of April, 1892, some Swiss friends took four of us Americans to witness the open-air Parliament of Appenzell, in which the proceedings were of extraordinary interest because the constitution of the canton was to be amended by popular vote.

As the sun rose in the eastern Alps the church bells of all the villages and towns in the canton began to ring. In half an hour thousands of mountaineers, shepherds, herdsmen, dairymen, and farmers were coming from every direction along smooth white roads or rugged mountain paths toward the place of assembly at the village of Trogen. We had never before realized how many people lived in the little villages, hamlets, and by-places of these upper Alps.

Every man coming to vote at the assembly wore a sword, not only because this has been for centuries the custom of voters, but because adherence to it was prescribed by proclamation.

The swords were the emblem of Swiss citizenship. But the festival was of peace, as well as law, without a quarrel or a hot word in all that multitude.

No man may dare demand payment of a debt on this day. It is freedom's day—the day when the richest and the poorest, the creditor and the debtor, the president and the peasant are alike.

Such scenes as we saw were taking place elsewhere in the Alps this morning. In several cantons the men were collecting in some meadow or on some mountain slope to adopt laws by popular vote.

For five hundred years this scene has been enacted yearly, and it may be enacted for a thousand years to come. To these democratic shepherds of the Alps no other system seems possible. They desire no political revolution, and they are almost as changeless as their mountains.

Besides wearing their swords, the voters mostly carried umbrellas as walking sticks, and all were in holiday attire. Every man wore a black hat.

Most of the men had to come from six to twelve miles, and return home in a single day—all for the privilege of a vote. But the Swiss

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do not consider voting a privilege merely. It is a solemn, patriotic duty, and the citizen is fined who does not attend the meeting on the last Sunday in April of every year.

The Parliament was to meet at eleven o'clock. Every vantage point, house top, wall, fence, or height of any kind was packed with spectators. It was only by the wand of official authority that we could make our way through the dense crowd to the great stone building where we had seats. The public square was so crammed that it looked, from our place at an upper window, like a sea of black hats, apparently without room for another one. There was no loud laughter or cheering, but the murmur of ten thousand in conversation floated up to our ears. Directly below us was the raised platform on which the officials of state were to stand during the ceremony. Right and left at the front of the platform two swords were fixed, the emblems of the state's authority.

All around, in full view, were the beautiful mountains and the green Alpine meadows; and down yonder, shining like a mirror, the great lake. Over beyond the lake we could see German land; and we thought of the contrast which

the institutions of that monarchical country, with its rule of force, presented to the freedom and simple ways of the people before us.

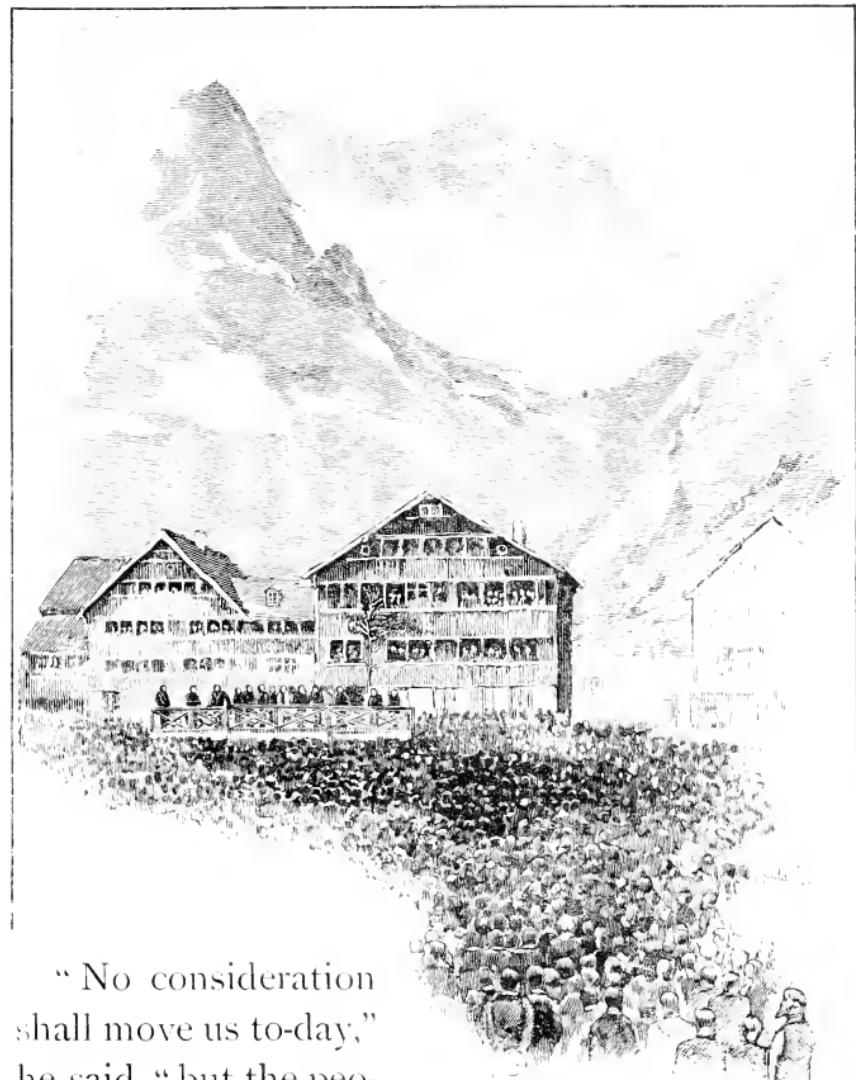
As eleven o'clock approached, guards formed a chain around the black mass of voters to exclude strangers, though there was no foot of vacant space. Every eye was bent on the platform. Suddenly silence became supreme. Then there was a quick sound of drums, and four *hallebardiers*, clad in the costume of the Middle Ages, mounted the platform.

A band struck up the national hymn. It was sung by the multitude, and then the officers of state ascended to their places.

The chief *Landamman*, or governor, wore a long black mantle and a great three-cornered military hat. The high constable and other officials wore cocked hats, and mantles of white and black.

As the Landamman stepped to the front of the platform, the change from the sea of black hats to a sea of bare heads was astounding. Every head was uncovered and bowed in prayer. After that, when hats were on again, the Landamman spoke.

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"No consideration shall move us to-day," he said, "but the people's good. No local interests, no party or political advantages, only the honor of our country shall be thought of in

our votes. Let us to-day be worthy of our freedom. I declare the Parliament open."

Every man present had in his hands a copy of the laws about to be proposed. There was no wrangling of debate. Days before coming here, each of these mountaineers had fully made up his mind how to vote. There was nothing now but his own conscience to influence him in his action.

Suddenly the high constable shouted in a stentorian voice:

"Let every man whom it pleases to have this law adopted hold up his hand."

When the high constable had estimated that show of hands, he shouted:

"Let every man whom it does *not* please to have this proposal adopted hold up his hand." Usually the majorities, one way or the other, are so great that counting is not necessary.

What a man is this high constable! His authority is not insignificant. He is highly respected in the canton. His voice could completely drown the open-air speakers on American or English platforms.

When he cries out, "Mr. Landamman, fellow-citizens, and dear confederates, do you accept this

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law?" every one in the vast audience hears, and the very hills seem to echo his thundering tones.

A dozen proposed laws were quickly put before the assembly, and passed or voted down. In no case was there a shout of the victors or a groan of the defeated. Even the constitution was amended without a cheer. Aside from the loud and solemn calls of the high constable there was silence.

"Fellow-citizens and dear confederates, is it your will that this clause be added to our constitution?" Instantly the black sea of hats was hidden by the white sea of uplifted hands. The spectator was astonished that the important act should be done so suddenly.

In this parliament are no signs of partisanship. Only one question seemed in every voter's mind: Is this proposed law for the common good? There was not a demagogue or a wire-puller or a political boss within a mile of the place.

A new insurance law was soon proposed to the assembly. Its merits had been under discussion for months. Every mind was made up.

"Will you have this law, citizens and confederates?" the high constable called.

There was a feeble, silent show of affirmative hands, which proved clearly that the answer was to be in the negative; and when the second call was made, the uplifted hands proved the measure overwhelmingly lost. The officials who prepared and proposed it were standing on the platform and witnessed the defeat; but there was not a word nor a frown from them. They had learned the people's will, and they turned to other business.

All the officers of state are elected by like shows of hands. There is no speaking, except that the aspirants for the position of high constable may speak five minutes each, nominate themselves, and prove their voices. During his speech the constable in office puts his regalia and hat aside, and resumes them only in case he is reelected. The newly elected officers are conducted to the platform by the *halberdiers*, and the literal mantles of office are transferred to their shoulders in the presence of the multitude.

The installation, like the election, was accomplished in a few minutes. Not only had important laws been passed, but officers had been elected, and a change in the constitution adopted in two hours.

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Then came the administering of the oath of allegiance. Every head was bared and every hand held toward heaven, while in a slow and solemn voice ten thousand patriot Swiss repeated with the Landamman the declaration that they would be good citizens, true to Switzerland, observers of the laws they had made, and faithful to the common good. This solemn oath, made in the open sunlight and witnessed by the everlasting mountains, seemed doubly made in the presence of God.

In another half hour the people were peacefully wending their way along the white roads and up zigzag mountain paths to their homes. They had done their duty as free citizens, and with a ceremony as simple and solemn as a sacrament itself.

S. H. M. BYERS.



DOWN THE MOSELLE

THE river Moselle, often called "The Bride of the Rhine," is even more picturesque than the Rhine itself. It is more winding, and also narrower, so that the voyager is nearer the beauty and quaintness of its shores. Its bordering hills, although no higher than those along the Rhine, are at least equally impressive, while the valleys and ravines which wind away between them are more irregular and inviting.

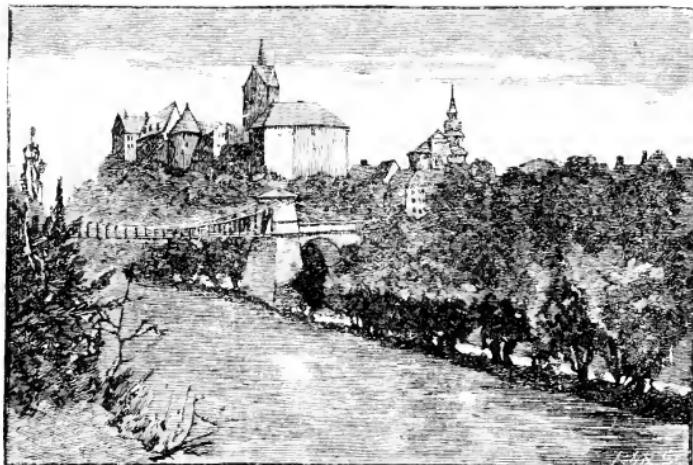
A rowing trip down the Moselle is safe, easy, and full of pleasure. Imagine yourself gliding down stream, with charming Treves fading into the distance as the afternoon shadows lengthen. You are at the oars, pulling with slow, even strokes. Your friend, in the stern, holds the tiller. You are fairly under way, and already the scenes on either hand begin to interest you.

Here, for instance, you pass a company of German infantry, bathing. They keep their ranks, and at signals upon the bugle throw off their

Down the Moselle

clothing, plunge, still in line, into the stream, and a few moments later emerge and dress. One wonders if they eat, drink, and sleep, in company formation.

Soon you round a bend and float for a mile or two between green meadows, behind which lie



villages embowered in trees. A rude scow, laden with peasants returning from work and singing some evening hymn, crosses your course.

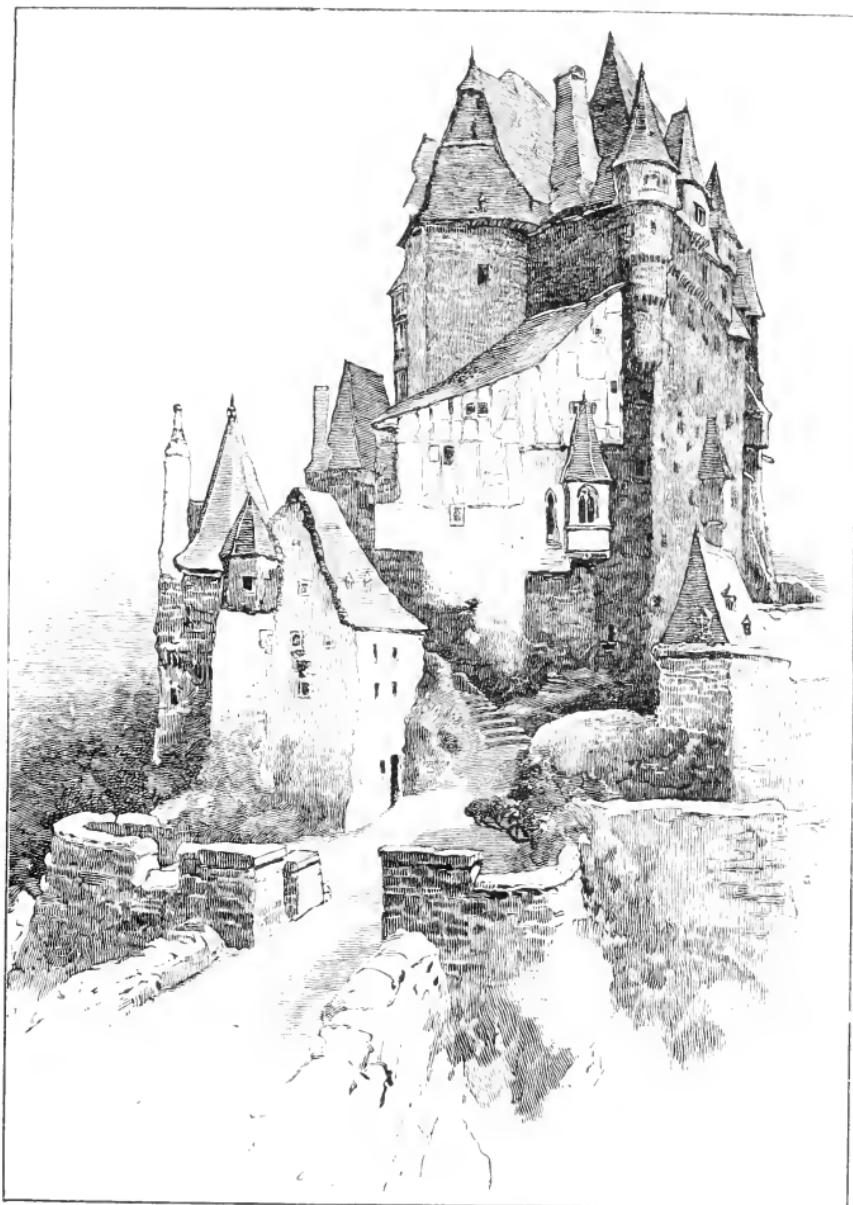
Now it grows dark, and at the next little village you land, under the lee of a jetty, and moor your boat for the night. Until you have almost reached the Rhine, you may safely leave anything in the boat overnight. You find your way into the village and soon are settled snugly at the inn.

Cold pork and ham, boiled eggs, rye and sweetened white bread, cakes, with plenty of whatever fruit is in season, and beer and wine if you wish, form your evening meal. The thick feather pillows upon your bed, one of which is intended to serve as a blanket, are rather warm, and if your pitcher held five times as much water you would be better pleased. But you are so healthily tired that you sleep soundly until the bell of the neighboring church rouses you next morning.

After breakfast the maid-servant, acting as porter, carries your luggage to the boat. Before long, perhaps, the shores in front of you look surprisingly white, and, as you float down between them, you find them covered with linen which has been washed and spread out to dry and bleach. Many lively groups of washerwomen are passed, who keep up an incessant spat-spatting of their sheets and pillowcases while they chat and joke.

Sometimes for miles the hillsides rise almost from the water's edge, and are covered with carefully cultivated vineyards. Now and then you pass a considerable town, and hear a band playing in the garden of its chief hotel. Sometimes the

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river is so winding that you row for two hours and a dozen miles in order to reach a point only a single mile, easily walked in fifteen minutes, from your starting place.

The Moselle castles are less famous than those on the Rhine, perhaps, but they are quite as picturesque and equally worth visiting. Usually they stand, protectingly, upon high places above the villages. The most striking castle of all is Schloss Eltz, three miles inland from Moselkern, rising upon its knoll above the mass of foliage like some great rock above the waves of the ocean. It is one of the best-preserved specimens of the mediæval architecture in all Germany.

MORTON DEXTER.

A RUSSIAN VILLAGE

THE first impression produced upon a stranger by a village in Great Russia is undoubtedly gloomy. The small, one-storied cottages have



A Russian Village Scene

neither flowers in front nor clean, white-curtained windows. They look depressingly dark. The unwhitewashed walls are built of thick logs, if there are woods in the neighborhood, or else of rough stone. The windows, of which there are

never more than three, are small, with tiny panes of glass,—for glass is expensive.

The straw roofs are unsightly, as in most cases they are unthatched and are merely made out of bundles of straw held together with straw ropes. Sometimes, when fodder is scarce, it will even happen that the roofs are removed to feed the cattle, and the cottages then look still more forlorn. Many of them have only one room and a small passage, entered by two or three steps. When there are two rooms they are built on opposite sides of the passage.

The interiors are as poor as the outside. The walls are neither papered nor whitewashed, and a fourth of the room, sometimes even a third, is occupied by a large brick or beaten clay oven. The top of this is generally used as a bed for the aged or sick, and as a nursery for the children.

Two deal forms and a deal table are the furniture. These are placed along the two principal walls, and here also is fixed cornerwise a little shelf for the sacred pictures, painted in dark colors on wood, before which hangs a little oil lamp to be lighted on holy days. A small bottle of holy water, a colored Easter egg, a bunch of

A Russian Village

dried willows in bud,—a substitute for the palm,—these or similar relics complete the decorations of that side of the room.

In the corner, nearer the stove, is a bedstead, consisting generally of two or three planks fastened to the wall; there are seldom sheets or blankets on it. This bed is reserved for the father and mother; the other members of the family sleep on the benches or on the stove. Sometimes there is a little loft made of planks fixed underneath the ceiling where three or four persons can lie. The fourth corner by the stove contains the crockery and a few kitchen utensils. Under the bed there may be a large, unpainted wooden chest, wherein all family linen and clothing are kept. The two-roomed cottages may be richer in a few articles, a brass *samovar*, or tea urn, perhaps, but this is the exception.

The village looks even less attractive than it might, owing to the absence of trees and shrubs near the houses, and the unpaved condition of the road, which in the rainy season is so deep in mud that the pigs can bury themselves up to their snouts in it. Some of the more prosperous cottagers try to add some external decoration, and

here and there artistically carved porches and window shutters may be seen; but these ornaments are lost in their gloomy setting.

The village, however, is not altogether lacking in brightness. There is often a river close by with very picturesque banks and a mill, and there is always the church, built in Byzantine style and standing in the most prominent position. It is whitewashed and generally surrounded by an inclosure planted with lilacs and acacias.

The priest's house, too, is pleasant to look at, as a rule, with its garden and white-curtained windows; and if the village boasts a resident "squire," the visitor may be still further cheered by the sight of a large house, roofed with green iron and having an extensive garden and other luxuries obtainable only by the rich. Nowadays there is sometimes a school, though this rarely differs in appearance from the usual peasant's cottage, and even a cottage hospital may be found in some villages, built and maintained by the local government; but both are, unfortunately, very rare.

Nevertheless, as regards the land, the peasants in Great Russia are better off than those of many

A Russian Village

other countries, for the little they have belongs to them; their cottages and the ground at the back are their own. From time immemorial the land has been the communal property of the village. There are no private owners except the squire and the few who have bought some land from him, and the old-time custom of supplying every inhabitant of the village with some land is still strictly observed.

While woods and pastures are used in common, the arable land is divided into three parts, according to its quality, and each household is allotted a fair share in these three parts. The size of each allotment depends in the first instance on the quantity of land held by the community, and then on the number of male workers in the family. Each household cultivates its plots independently, but no hedges are grown between the divisions, only a small furrow marking them off; and for this reason Russian grain fields, although cultivated in small allotments, are well adapted for the use of steam implements.

Only poverty and ignorance prevent the peasants of Great Russia from growing their grain with modern methods and improvements. In

South Russia, where the peasants are a little better off, the fields in many places resound with the whir and whistle of labor-saving machinery.

This system of property in land has developed a strong village organization, called the *mir*. All that concerns the village as a whole is decided by the *mir* and carried out by the community. It is not an elected body; its members are made up of all those workers who have attained their majority. Every head of a household, women included, if there is not a son of ripe age, has a voice in the assembly.

There is no voting in the *mir*, no chairman, no secretary, no special time or place of meeting. Whenever a matter turns up which concerns the whole village the men and women gather together at some place of their own choosing—in summer time this is always out of doors—and talk over the affair until they arrive at an agreement. If the subject is one of importance, the meeting will be convoked again and again until it is settled; for unanimity is indispensable in the *mir* decisions.

Besides questions concerning the division, purchase, and renting of land, the *mir* decides about

A Russian Village

the building of churches, the opening of schools, the digging of wells, and the making of roads and bridges. It also fixes the dates for plowing, haymaking, and harvesting. When these are arranged, men, women, and children all turn out and work to the accompaniment of cheery laughter and songs. Indeed, in passing through a village when some communal work is in hand, such as building a bridge or repairing a road, one might easily fancy the villagers were out for recreation, so bright and merry do they look and so easily does the work seem to be done.

The grain fields, although cultivated separately, must all be harvested at the same time, because, when the grain is cut, the land becomes the pasture for the cattle of the whole village. The driving out of the cattle devolves upon a communal headman, who is himself a characteristic figure in the Russian village. He is generally a lonely old man, who is appointed to this post by the mir; and each household contributes to his food, clothing, and shelter. In some villages the mir builds him a cottage, in others each family receives him in turn; but the mir provides for his wants and punishes him for any neglect of duty.

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In harvest time the fields are a beautiful sight. All the men wear straw hats and snow-white shirts and trousers belted with a gay woolen girdle, the handiwork of their women folk. The women themselves are clad in finely embroidered

white linen shirts and bright-colored skirts and kerchiefs, also the result of their own industry. On any other occasion a woman might wear some article she had bought, but when harvesting it is her pride to wear everything of her own fashioning.



In Festive Dress

Narrow as the village life may be, it still retains many good old customs. If a family is in distress through death or illness of the father, and too poor to hire labor at harvest time, help is always forthcoming. When the grain is reaped and brought home and there is nothing wherewith to entertain the harvesters, they themselves

A Russian Village

supply the materials for a feast, without which it would be considered disrespectful and unlucky to close the day.

“Bees” are an institution in the Russian village. All summer they are in full swing, especially among the women. Each one’s flax is gathered and beaten in turn, the potatoes are dug and stored, and so on. But at the end of every day the evening air is full of song and dance, for in Russia they do not forget to play after work.

In fact, the village youth lose no opportunity of meeting for amusement. In the summer nights there are the national songs and dances out of doors. In winter the girls meet at one another’s houses to spin, and the young men join them to sing and play games while spindle and distaff are plying.

The Russian peasants are a striking example of restricted needs and self-supply. They buy very few articles of either food or clothing. Rye bread, cabbage soup, potatoes, or a porridge of



A Russian Type

buckwheat or millet form their usual dinner. On Sunday a dish of milk or eggs may be added. From time to time a sheep or pig is killed, and then there is a little meat. Only the richer families or those who live near the great towns drink tea, the poorer having tea only when they are ill; and the only article of everyday use which they buy is salt.

The clothing is altogether homemade. Each family grows the flax out of which the women make the linen. Every woman may not know how to fix the loom, but nearly all know how to weave. That very necessary winter garment, the sheepskin, is from their own sheep, as is the woolen cloth of which the overcoat is made.

The usual costume for a man consists of a white linen shirt worn over the trousers and belted in about the waist; the trousers are of the same coarse linen and are worn with the ends tucked into the top-boots. But as a rule boots are worn only by the richer peasants, and even among them the old people keep them for Sunday wear. The general foot gear is bast (bark fiber) shoes, the legs being wrapped in a bandage of linen or woolen, according to the season. The

A Russian Village

shoe strings keep these leg wraps from unfastening, and the trousers are tucked inside them. An overcoat with a girdle, a conical hat, and a pair of warm gloves complete the outfit.

The women's dress is extremely picturesque. They wear a white linen shirt with long, full sleeves; over this a short, colored skirt and a long apron; shoes or boots similar to the men's, but hats never; their heads are covered with a kerchief or shawl, which on Sundays is replaced by an embroidered headdress for married women, while the girls twine bright ribbons in their own long plaits.

Nowhere, perhaps, has woman such a wide sphere of activity as in Great Russia. There she is the gardener, the dairymaid, the sheep-shearer, the spinner, the dyer, the weaver, and the sewer of the cloth when it is woven. She works, moreover, beside the man in the field, in the wood, and on the river. In several parts of central Russia the men are compelled to leave the village for many months in the year to earn a little money, and at such times all the field work is done by women. Their home industries are various and of a high quality. In the small markets of the

smaller towns, which are held once a week, one sees hundreds of peasant women selling garden, dairy, and poultry produce, as well as rolls of finest linen, tablecloths, towels, fine laces, and artistic embroideries.

Yet with all these conditions favorable to prosperity, the Russian peasant is, as a rule, terribly poor. This is due to several causes. The first and most important is the smallness of the allotments, which necessitates the renting of other land, especially meadow land, for which the rent is much too high.

In 1861, when the peasants were liberated, the government forced the serf owners to sell so much land to the communes. For this the government paid, and the peasants are bound to refund this money within the next forty-seven years. But the land which the owners were willing to give up has already proved insufficient; since then the agricultural population has greatly increased; consequently the allotments have grown ridiculously small, and pasture lands are especially scarce, as the landowners retained nearly all of them. The lack of suitable pasturage is a very serious difficulty.

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Although the allotments produce little, it would be possible to manage were it not for the ruinous rate of taxes. It is usual for a peasant family to pay from twenty-five to thirty-five dollars, besides all the indirect taxes, which are heavy, especially as the average income of the peasant is very small. To pay rates and taxes he sells his grain, at times, for half price, and then for nine months out of twelve the family eats bread adulterated with all sorts of things; really pure rye bread is eaten only in exceptionally good years.

Any one looking at a Russian peasant, especially at plowing time, can see that both he and his horses are permanently underfed. The man is small, his face and hair are colorless, and his expression is hopeless. Watch him at his dinner in the field; it will consist of a piece of dark, sour, unwholesome rye bread and onions washed down with a sour drink made of bran and a little flour.

His horse is not so tall as an English yearling; it is mere skin and bone. In the spring the horse does not get enough even of the old rotten roof straw. The harness is made of scraps of rope

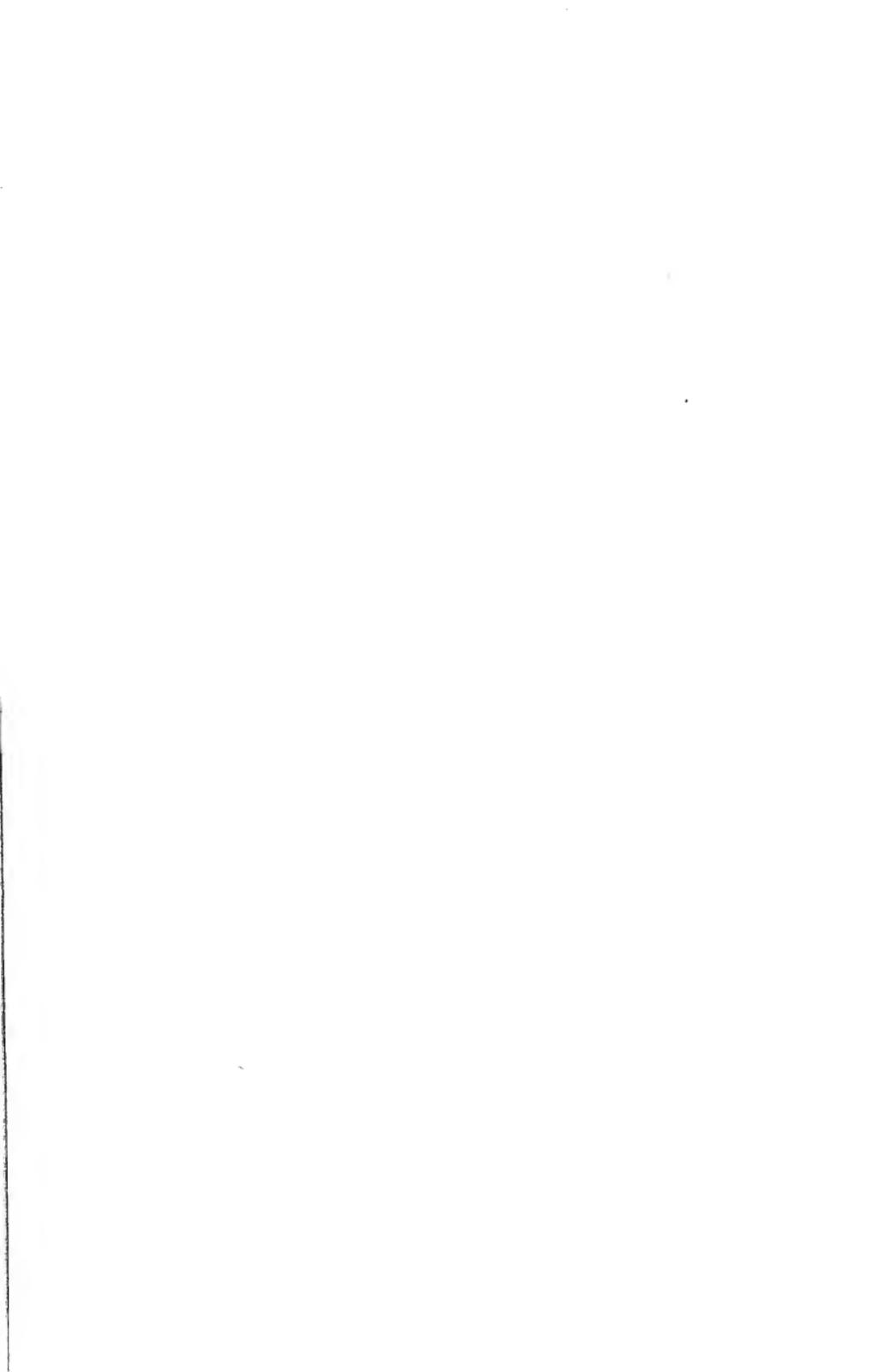
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and leather; the plow is miserably small and scratches the soil just a few inches deep, over which plowing a wooden harrow will be dragged.

The Russian peasant's intelligence is unquestionable. He is quick to learn new things and to adapt himself to new conditions — witness those who migrate to Siberia, where the land is free, and those who find their way to America, where there are free schools. What wonders might we not justly expect to be worked in the little villages of Great Russia by liberty and education!

THE PRINCESS KROPOTKIN.

Mar 8 1902.



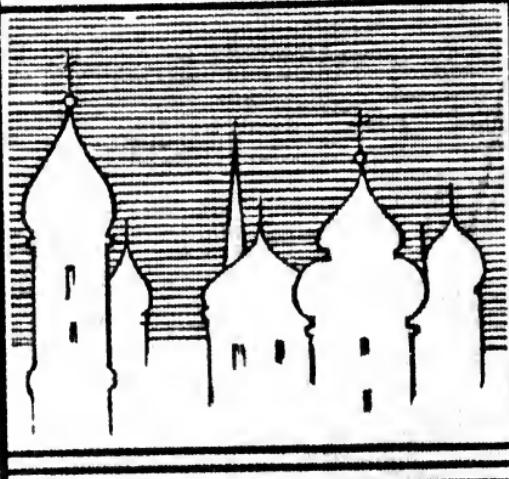
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